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THE

TRIPPINGS OF TOM PEPPER;

OR

THE RESULTS OF ROMANCING.

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

VOL. II.

BY HARRY FRANCO.

*presented to
Charles Frederick Briggs*

NEW-YORK:

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TOM PEPPER;
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CHAPTER I.

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that posterity should possess. My only fear is that in the brief record which the stone-cutter shall make of my life, some errors will creep in, for brevity is no safeguard against mistakes, as the literature of the country will show.

As to the objections of my friends to being put into a book, I could not but think that such delicacy was rather an affectation of modesty than a sincere feeling. Besides, what right had they to complain if I treated them no worse than I did myself. To do better by your neighbor than you do by yourself is clearly transcending the Christian injunction. And then it is quite impossible that I should add to, or diminish, the stature of my friends. I am not accountable for their crookednesses. If I misrepresent them, then my impersonations are not them; but mere names; and if I represent them truly, what right have they to quarrel with the mirror that gives a correct reflection of their features? Thus I reasoned with myself, and determined to publish my biography at once. But I did not reason correctly, as I have since found, and it would have been better for my peace to have left my auto-biography for posthumous publication. Even those with whom I consulted, when I first thought of publishing, and who advised me not to be too scrupulous about mentioning the names of certain persons, were the first to complain when they found that I had included their own in my memoirs. They were tickled with the thought of seeing their friends showed up, but when they found they had been shown up themselves all their philosophy left them, and from being my best friends they have become my worst enemies. This is very unreasonable. If I were writing a work of fiction, instead of penning a sober narrative of truth, it would be quite another matter, and they might find fault with some reason; but even then, I might plead the practice of all great authors, who have invariably introduced their acquaintances, as well as themselves, into their works. The King of Novelists, as Madame George Sand calls Walter Scott, says, "no original character was ever composed by any author, without the idea having been previously suggested by something

which he had observed in nature." This is an honest confession from the most prolific of novel writers, who built up a great fortune and a great reputation by using a capital which he found ready invested in the characters of his acquaintances. Another great master in the art of characterization, Sheridan, has slyly said, through one of his personages, "what is the use of having friends unless one makes use of them." The portrait painter puts his friends upon canvass; the historian sends them down to posterity in ponderous volumes; the novelist and romancer transform their friends into knaves and saints, for the amusement of the world, while the daguerreotypist hangs up half the world in little mahogany frames, and arranges them on the walls of a room ten feet square for the inspection of curious visitors. There is no good reason, that I can see, why the auto-biographist, who writes an honest history of his life, or any part of it, should be deprived of the privilege which all other men are permitted to exercise. My friends must quarrel with their parents for making them what they are, they have no right to quarrel with me for describing them as they are. However, why should I attempt to apologise for doing what has always been done, and always approved. It is not improbable that King Richard the Third would have quarrelled with Shakspeare for drawing his portrait so correctly, but all the rest of the world have confessed their obligations to the dramatist for it; so, although one or two of my friends may quarrel with me because I have enabled them to see themselves as others see them, there are multitudes who have thanked me, and begged that I would go on and finish the other volume of my auto-biography. It is in obedience, therefore, to the demand of those whom I have no right to disappoint; having, in fact, by the publication of one volume, bound myself, by implication, to furnish a companion to it, that I now resume my narrative, and promise to continue it until I shall have given all that the reasonable curiosity of the public has a right to demand.

It is extremely inconvenient to me to receive letters by every mail, asking when I am going to finish my life, and to have peo-

ple stop me every day when I happen to go to my bookseller's, for the last new work, or to my banker's, for my dividends, and say, "Where's the rest of your memoirs?" "What has become of that funny Ferocious?" "What ever happened to Old Gil?" "Is your present lady's name Pauline or Desire?" "Who inherited the Blackmere estate?" "Do tell me if Mr. Pilfor and Professor Sprads are living now?" "I wonder if I didn't see your Riquets at the theatre last night, dressed in a blue cap and fancy cravat?" To rid myself at once of these annoyances, by gratifying the curiosity which I have excited, I have again resumed my pen. The nights are getting longer and cooler, in a short time fires will be agreeable, and already I can sit comfortably at my desk and write by lamp-light without being disturbed by mosquitoes. There is nothing, therefore, to interrupt me, and I shall finish my task as speedily as possible, and trust that when I get to the end of my second volume, none will repent having followed me from the first.

I am not naturally churlish or unsocial. I probably take as much unaffected pleasure in the society of my friends as any other person in similar circumstances. But the circle of my acquaintances is already very wide; in my varied fortunes I have necessarily formed many intimacies, and I find it already extremely difficult to entertain all whose company is a pleasure to me, and who have claims upon my gratitude; I must therefore hint to my numerous readers, that the fact of their becoming acquainted with me from reading my memoirs, does not necessarily impose an obligation upon me to become acquainted with them. I trust that they will be able to feel an unreciprocated sympathy in this case. I have been compelled to make these seemingly ungracious remarks from having been called upon during the past summer by a considerable number of persons who addressed me in the most familiar terms, laughed knowingly in my face, and when I told them, with some embarrassment, that I had not the pleasure of remembering them, would reply that they knew me like a book, as they had read my autobiogra-

phy; and I could not find it in my heart to give them to understand that I had no ambition to cultivate such one-sided acquaintances. My wife has been the greatest sufferer by these peculiar friends, for they have eaten up all the fruits in my garden, and she has none left for preserves. It is true, that from these numerous visitors I have picked out two or three intelligent friends, whose acquaintance I value highly, but I am willing to rest content with the acquisitions which I have already made, and hope to be excused hereafter from any more visitors of the kind.

At the close of the first volume of my autobiography it will be remembered that I had again called upon Mr. Bassett and had my pockets refilled by that excellent gentleman, who had never refused to supply my wants, nor met me with a frown upon his countenance. But I could not help thinking that there was an evident coolness in his manner towards me which made me feel that he now befriended me from a sense of duty rather than from affection, as he did at first; and I would have rejected his pecuniary assistance had I not thought myself bound by his former kindness to follow his instructions implicitly. He was a man of such upright principles that duty was to him a matter of affection, and he seemed, even in his mere business transactions, to be influenced as much by a feeling of love towards those whom he dealt with, as a desire for gain; and I have heard it said that his customers all regarded him as a personal friend rather than as a jobber with whom they dealt from motives of interest. His treatment of me had been from the beginning kind and parental, and I felt more deeply grateful to him from knowing how much trouble it had cost him from the opposition of his wife, who without having any decidedly bad qualities, was one of the most disagreeable persons I have ever encountered. No one knew how disagreeable she was so well as her husband; but he had taken her "for better for worse," and he felt himself bound to make the most of her. He knew that she was too old to alter, and instead of making himself unhappy about her, he wisely made

up his mind to try and get used to her. By resolutely maintaining his good nature, and allowing her to have her own way when it did not interfere with his sense of duty, and accustoming himself to looking at the few good points in her character, he contrived to live with her and enjoy a tolerable degree of comfort in his own house. It is not unlikely that my own feelings towards her were somewhat embittered by her hatred of me, but I do not think that I have given a prejudiced view of her character. Mr. Bassett was in time very happily relieved from her, so that he afterwards enjoyed many years of domestic felicity with a wife who was in all respects the reverse of that troublesome woman; but as the circumstances attending the exit of Mrs. Bassett from this stage of existence were very peculiar, and intimately connected with my own history, I must defer any further allusion to them until the proper period shall arrive for their introduction.

The money which Mr. Bassett gave me, I found upon examination, was a twenty-dollar bill; and as he had impressed it upon my mind that I must now seek out some means of employment by which I would be enabled to live by my own exertions, I determined to husband this small sum so carefully that it should suffice for all my wants until I could hit upon some means of getting a living by my labor. This appeared to me a very easy matter; there were so many different ways of earning one's bread that I felt no uneasiness as to my success. But my mind happened to be too much occupied, just then, with the thought of meeting Pauline at the house of Professor Sprads, and consummating my happiness by our marriage, to entertain any other project seriously. So, having eaten a slight breakfast at a public restaurant in Broadway, and made my toilet at a barber's shop, I went directly to the Professor's house, expecting to meet Pauline, for it had never occurred to me that her running off from her father the night before, at the prayer meeting, might prevent her leaving the house the next day.

I had some difficulty in finding the Professor's residence again, and some trouble, after I had found it, in gaining access

to the Professor and Madame Sprads, who happened to be at their morning meal; and as the Professor afterwards confessed to me, engaged in a little domestic scene caused by his remarks on the coffee, similar to the one I had witnessed the night before on the basis of an absent salad. These little difficulties were not uncommon in this musical family. But on this occasion I saw nothing to indicate a want of harmony between the Professor and his lady; but, on the contrary they seemed to act wonderfully well in concert, and their thoughts harmonized in the most extraordinary manner.

The Professor kept me waiting a long while in his parlor to amuse myself as I best could with the objects which it contained before he made his appearance; and then he detained me a long while in expatiating on the remarkable qualities of Madame Sprads, before that *distingue* lady, as he called her, came in. I was all the while waiting with great patience for Pauline, and every time a cart rumbled past the house, Madame Sprads would run to the window and say she was quite sure it must be the Misses Gilson coming in their father's carriage. To wile away the time she volunteered to play some difficult pieces of the Professor's composition, on her harp, which fairly set my teeth on edge.

Then the Professor performed some difficult passages on the piano, which had even a more unpleasant effect upon me than his lady's performance on the harp. There is really nothing so difficult to endure, that I know of, in the way of enjoyment, as difficult music; and that which the Professor and Madame Sprads treated me to, was the worst I had ever listened to. But the thought that Pauline had sat in the same room, and produced similar sounds, made it much more endurable than it otherwise would have been. When they had finished all their pieces, and found that I was not much soothed in my feelings by their performances, they began to entertain me by relating their grievances with the press and the critics; and my hair stood on end almost, at the recital of the wrongs that had been inflicted upon them by

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Mr. Pilfor and Mr. Riquets, who had been employing their talents and their pens in the base design of injuring the reputation of every *artiste* who would not purchase their silence, and who had an intense jealousy of Professor Sprads, on account of his elevated character, and who persecuted Madam Sprads for two reasons: Firstly, because she was pure and classical in her style; and, secondly, because she was the lady of Professor Sprads. I was quite willing to believe that Mr. Pilfor and his friend could be guilty of any enormity, after suffering as I had from their voracious appetites and luxurious tastes; so I allowed the Professor and Madam Sprads to indulge in the most liberal strain of remarks upon the character of my two friends, without taking the least offence; indeed, I am not quite sure that I did not myself speak of them in terms not altogether complimentary. I will not repeat any of the many stories that the Professor and Madam Sprads told me respecting those gentlemen, because I have understood recently that they are both endeavoring to get up in the world, and become honest members of society; Mr. Riquets having been promoted to the situation of a check-taker in a circus, and Mr. Pilfor being an assistant in a daguerrian gallery in a neighboring city. It is true, that I shall be under the necessity of detailing two or three little transactions of these worthies, before I conclude my memoirs, but I shall not do them an unnecessary injury by repeating the stories told about them by other people; for I have once before remarked that it was for the sole purpose of narrating my own adventures, and not those of other people, that I undertook to write this history.

The time passed wearily enough at the Professor's house, in spite of all the attempts which he and his accomplished lady made to amuse me; for apart from the distaste which I had for these people, who were dreadfully shallow, and never for a moment succeeded in deceiving me as to their real character, I was so impatient to see Pauline once more, that the wittiest or wisest person in the world would have been tiresome to me. Although the Professor and Madam Sprads did not succeed in imposing

themselves upon me for the great *artistes* they represented themselves, yet I must acknowledge that they succeeded in convincing me that they were a pair of greater rogues than I at first suspected them to be. But it is quite impossible for any one to be always guarded against a cheat. The most shallow-witted knave may succeed by misrepresentation in deceiving the most worthy people. I sat in the little dingy red-curtained parlor of Madam Sprads—she chose to call it her *boudoir*, until I began to think I had been deceived by the Professor, and that Pauline had never been a pupil of his wife, a suspicion that was greatly strengthened by the recollection that I had never heard the Gilsons make any allusions to Madam Sprads, when a knock was heard at the door, and the Professor starting up, exclaimed:—"Heaven be praised! There are those Gilsons, at last."

I was going to rush to the door, but Madam Sprads caught me by the arm and begged that I would be seated, saying that it might compromise the character of her establishment if I were seen by the neighbors. So I sat down again, and allowed Madam Sprads herself to usher in the Gilsons, and I felt very much relieved when the little Professor himself made his escape from another door, saying that he could not allow himself to be caught by the young ladies in his roquelaire. Madam Sprads had been gone but a few minutes when she returned and said: "Alfred, my love, your purse, if you please; I want a trifle of twelve shillings." But suddenly discovering that the Professor had left the room, she exclaimed, "Mercy on me! I declare I have unconsciously exposed myself. Would you have the kindness Mr. Pepper, to loan me so trifling a sum as twelve shillings, I am sure I am quite ashamed to ask for it, until the Professor comes in?"

I knew that if I loaned her the amount I should never get it back, but I was desirous not to offend her until I was sure that Pauline would not come; so I took out my pocket-book, reached her the twenty-dollar bill that Mr. Bassett had given me, which was all the money I had in the world, and told her to bring me

back the change. Madam took the bill and disappeared, but she was gone so unreasonably long that I began to mistrust that she did not intend to return. The Professor did not come back, the Gilsons did not make their appearance, and I was now thoroughly convinced that I had been grossly swindled. I was just on the point of searching the house for the Professor and his wife, when Madam Sprads burst open the door, and rushing wildly into the room threw herself upon the sofa and began to wring her hands, and exclaim that she was ruined, and unless I would have pity on her, her character was gone forever.

As my thoughts were mainly occupied with Pauline, I imagined at once that the distress of Madam Sprads must be in some way connected with that idol of my heart.

"Pray, tell me quick," I exclaimed, "what has happened? Has any harm been done to Pauline?"

"O, no! no!" said Madam Sprads, falling upon her knees, and lifting up her hands and eyes to me; "O, no! no! no! Worse, much worse than that. But say that you will forgive me; only say that!"

"I do not know, Madam Sprads," said I, rising and taking my hat, "what you may have done requiring my forgiveness, of course, but I forgive you; only give me my money that I may go, for I perceive that there is no prospect of meeting Miss Gilson in your house."

Hereupon Madam Sprads clung hold of my legs and nearly tripped me up by her violent action.

"O, my dear, dear Mr. Pepper!" she exclaimed, "how can I bring my mind to tell you that just as I was going to reach your twenty-dollar bill to that baker's-man, a puff of wind came and blew it entirely out of my hands, and I have not been able to find it since."

I saw how it was; I had been robbed of my money, and there was no help for it. But in the anger of the moment I told the lady that she was a cheat, and that I had suspected as much in the beginning; and that I forgave her, but that I would have a

separate settlement with the Professor. This, unhappily, only made matters worse, for she now clung to me with such force that I could not get away, and she would not allow me to depart until she had exacted a promise that I would not injure a hair of his head, nor even tell him of the loss of the bill, for she said it would ruin her dear Alfred's peace of mind forever, if he knew how careless she had been. This, too, I promised, for a moment's reflection convinced me that it would be a waste of time to attempt to get my money back from these sharpers. Madame Sprads said that I should not lose a penny in consequence of her carelessness, for her benefit concert would come off in a few days, and then she would have it in her power to repay me in full. But she said it would oblige her if I would consent to receive twenty tickets, which I might very readily dispose of among my *distingue* acquaintances.

I was heartily sick of such shocking knavery, and could not but pity people who were reduced to the practice of such despicable tricks for the means of subsistence. "Ah!" thought I, "when I came out of the Professor's house, and found myself once more alone in the world, without a shilling in my pocket, why will not people die when they find it impossible to live with honor?"

But I then had never known what it was really to feel the want of money, and had not been compelled to resort to practices which my necessities afterwards drove me to. A poor man needs a greater stock of virtue in this world, to fortify him against temptations, than a rich one does; and yet, from my observations, I am bound to say that I believe there is more unequivocal honesty of intention among the poor than among the wealthy.

Whether the Professor and his wife had been deceiving me, respecting the Gilsons, I knew not, but I had no doubt now, that they were mere needy sharpers, and I resolved never to see them again. If Pauline had ever been to their house, I did not believe that I was likely to see her there again, and therefore de-

terminated to seek an interview with her elsewhere. But being now without a dollar in my pocket, and having no home, my first thoughts were bent upon finding some employment, by which I could earn my living, and get money enough to enable me to pay off my indebtedness to old Gil. It was idle to think about marrying Pauline, until I could provide a home for her; and as I could never think of anything but that bewitching girl, when I was in her company, I concluded to avoid her, lest I should be tempted to commit some imprudent act. My first impulse was to conceal my last loss from Mr. Bassett, but as I should have to tell him in the end what had become of my money, I resolved to get rid of that unpleasant duty at once, and bear his censures as well as I could. But, moneyless as I was, I was determined not to accept anything from him again. I felt that it was now time that I took upon myself the responsibility of my own support. I could not but think that if ever I should be restored to Captain St. Hugh, that he would think the better of me for meeting my fate manfully, and refusing to live upon the charity of my old benefactor. With such feelings I once more sought Mr. Bassett, and related to him my new misfortune. He listened to me with greater gravity than he had heard my other confessions, but did not show any displeasure.

"You have done right, Tom," said he, "to tell me of this last accident. If you had kept your loss to yourself it would have subjected you to a good many mortifications, and the truth would have leaked out at last. But I am surprised that you should have been so easily taken in after having been so recently imposed upon. I think you will be more careful hereafter. But you will never know the real blessing of having money in your pocket until you have had to earn it by your own labor or ingenuity."

"Sir," I replied, a little touched by his insinuations, "whether that will make any change in my conduct I cannot say; but I trust I shall never be a miser in my feelings, or refuse to aid those whom I have it in my power to assist, let me receive my money as I may."

"I should hope not, Tom," said Mr. Bassett; "but there is a difference between giving your money and allowing yourself to be robbed of it."

"Well, sir," I replied, "I am determined to know what effect it will have upon me to depend solely upon my own efforts for support hereafter."

"That's a brave resolution, my boy," said Mr. Bassett; "you will feel happier for it, I have no doubt. But remember your promise to me, and do not enter into any engagements without first informing me of your intentions. If you require a character, send to me without any hesitation, and I will aid you all that I can in that respect."

"You are very good," I said, "but I am afraid that I must depend upon what I can say of myself for a character. I will try to recommend myself by my fidelity."

"That's better and better," said he; "with such a determination you have nothing to fear."

I discovered that he was not desirous that I should remain any longer in his counting room, so I shook his hand and wished him good morning. But he had not offered me any more money, and I was doubly mortified. In the first place I had lost the opportunity to refuse it, which I had calculated on, and had arranged a speech in my mind for the occasion; and then, I was convinced that he no longer felt for me the affectionate anxiety which he had before so unequivocally manifested. Let what would happen to me, I was fully resolved to perish before I would accept any assistance from him again. I could hardly hope now ever to see my father again, and but for Pauline, I should have felt quite indifferent what became of me. But I had no time for melancholy speculations, my wants were immediate and pressing, and I had the city before me to seek some means of supplying them.

CHAPTER II.

I had consumed nearly the whole afternoon, after parting from Mr. Bassett, in searching for some kind of employment, but had found nobody willing to employ me, probably because I was not fit for anything in particular, and as I had eaten no dinner I felt very hungry. My appetite was probably the sharper from the dubious prospect before me of being able to gratify it, and as I passed by the old coffee-house near Sloat Lane in William street, which was pulled down many years ago, and new stores erected on its site, and burned down and rebuilt two or three times since, the fumes of turtle soup rose from the grated windows of the spacious kitchen of that celebrated house, and caused both my eyes and mouth to run with water. That was a fine lordly-looking old house with an old-fashioned portico, arched windows and noble fan lights that let the sun shine stream into its wide hall. I wish they could have allowed that or some of the other spacious old houses to remain; such a wilderness of square granite columns as are now seen in that neighborhood present nothing to awaken a reminiscence of old times; the place is as much changed as though it had been overturned by an earthquake; and if it had not been for the incident which I am about to relate having occurred there, I should have lost all recollection of Sykes' old coffee-house. It was a famous place for good dinners, or at least what was considered good dinners in those days, for it cannot be denied that the last generation were shockingly gross eaters, and that they understood very little about the pleasures of the table, for after eating until their eyes almost started from their sockets, they would drink until all sense of taste was blunted and all perception of wit destroyed. To drink until you fell under the table, or grew so hilarious that you broke everything upon it, was considered gentlemanly and humorous. A man who should do such things now would create no other feelings than those of disgust or pity, but a shadow of the good time that's coming is already upon us, and gluttony and drunkenness are going out of

fashion. The art of enjoying life is better understood than it used to be. Decanters and corsets are both out of date, and many other similar things for which we are indebted to our ancestors are passing away. Temperance, loose dresses and silver forks, we owe to our selves. Our ancestors did all for us they could, but they bequeathed us some shocking bad habits that we have been at great pains to get rid of. One of the worst, was the fashion of gormandizing and guzzling which was carried on to a greater extent at Sykes's than at any other place in the city. There was a large bar-room with a billiard-room attached, which was a great place of resort for the dashing young merchants, cotton brokers, and sporting characters of the day. I had been invited there on two or three different occasions to dine, and although I disliked the place exceedingly, from the boisterousness of the company, and the strong smell of cigars and whiskey punch which pervaded it, yet when I scented the reeking fumes of the hot turtle soup, I could not help wishing that I had the means in my pocket to go in and pay for my dinner. I resolutely walked past the door and was just turning the corner, when I came full upon Mr. Pilfor, who, as usual, was dressed very fine, with a white vest and a damask rose in his button-hole. It was the first time that I had met him since our supper at the Nunquam. I was going to pass him by without speaking, but he reached out his hand and said, "My dear fellow how are you? You are just the individual in the whole world whom I had the greatest desire in life to meet. Do you know that I have been looking for you every where? I have been wanting to pay you that trifle which I became indebted to you through your extreme goodness at the Nunquam. Pray, how much is it? I told him that I had forgotten the exact sum, but that I would be content with twenty dollars.

"Twenty dollars!" said he, "O, it's quite a trifle. But hang business before dinner. Let us go into Sykes's and eat a spoonful of soup and then we will settle the matter."

I was really but too happy to accept the invitation of Mr. Pil-

for, because I wanted my money back, and because I was so very hungry. We accordingly entered, when Mr. Pilfor called or a private room and wrote upon a card at the bar directions for our dinner. It happened very oddly that just as we were going through the hall we encountered that Italian-image-vender-looking gentleman of the press, Mr. Riquets, whom Pilfor insisted should make the third of our party. I will do Mr. Riquets the credit to say that he blushed when he saw me, which showed that his intimacy with Mr. Pilfor had not rendered him quite so thoroughly proof against shame as that gentleman was. But he directly recovered himself and began to make puns on my name, calling me Spicy, and saying a great many smart things which were excessively common place, and too palpable to excite a laugh. I told him that it was no use for him to pun upon my name, because it would be altogether impossible for him to say any thing which somebody had not said before him. This did not stop him, however, for he kept on all dinner time, and by way of varying his humor and showing the extent of his wit, he would address me very gravely and say, Mr. Mustard, I will trouble you for the pepper, and when I told him he was extremely silly, he said that he didn't ask me for any Pepper-sauce. He laughed immoderately at these brilliant sallies and so did his friend Mr. Pilfor. For my own part, I couldn't see the humor of these merry gentlemen, and frankly told them so, at which they laughed all the more. The dinner having been ordered by Mr. Pilfor was an extravagantly good one, as a matter of course; there were four or five courses, an abundance of wine of the costliest description and some hot-house fruits; Mr. Riquets having discovered upon the bill some very curious old wines charged at twenty dollars the bottle, took it into his head to taste it, and so ordered a bottle. I told him he was an extravagant rascal, and that he had no right to put his friend Pilfor to such a needless expense.

"Much obliged to you for the hint," said Mr. Pilfor; "upon my word, Riquets, you are putting it upon me rather strong. I

must examine my exchequer and see if I can stand such a drain upon it."

Thereupon Mr. Pilfor began to feel in his pockets, first of his vest pockets, then in his coat, his hat and his pantaloons. "How very unfortunate it is," said he, affecting an alarmed look and turning to his friend, "upon my honor, Riquets, I have been robbed. Some desperate wretch has certainly picked my pockets."

"Is it possible!" exclaimed Riquets, rising, "let me go off to the police office and give information, that the rogue may be caught."

"Don't trouble yourself, my dear fellow," said Pilfor, "let us finish our cigars first, and then we will all go together; I dare say our friend, here, Mr. Pepper, will loan me the trifling amount necessary to pay for our dinner, until to-morrow, unless you happen to have money enough about you for that purpose, Riquets?"

Mr. Riquets was excessively sorry, but he had just borrowed a large sum and hadn't a dollar in his pocket.

"How very unfortunate!" said Mr. Pilfor, looking at me; "if you and my friend Riquets will have the goodness to amuse yourselves while I step to my office and replenish my purse, I will be obliged to you."

"I have no objections to remaining here," said I, "but as I am not the owner of a shilling at present, and don't know where to obtain one, I would prefer not being left here unless the bill is paid."

"What an extraordinary concatenation of circumstances!" said Mr. Pilfor, turning quite pale, "since that is the case I must go immediately to my office."

"Very good, gentlemen," I replied; "of course you did not call for this expensive dinner without the means to pay for it; and as I was invited by you to partake of it, I am not going to be left as a hostage with the landlord until you return. So have the goodness to keep your seats until I go and explain the matter to him."

"The fact is," said Mr. Pilfor, "I would prefer for you not say any thing about the matter at present. Leave all to me. You and Riquets walk arm-and-arm together and say nothing to anybody, and I will follow after you, and we can go with you to your friend's where you can borrow a small sum until to-morrow, when I will return it to you."

"No, I will consent to nothing of the kind," I said, planting myself against the door to prevent either of the gentlemen from going out; "I will ring for Sykes and tell him that I have eaten his dinner, but have got nothing to pay for it."

It is probable that the wine I had drunk made me a little more determined than I should otherwise have been, but I was not going to allow those genteel rascals to feed themselves at my expense again. I would not have sat down to eat with them, but hunger is a great destroyer of distinction, and I must confess that I did not feel the same contempt for my table companions before dinner as afterwards. The two friends seeing my determination, looked at each other in considerable alarm, and Mr. Pilfor said, "Upon my life but this is really a most extraordinary occurrence. My dear fellow," to me, "I hope you don't intend to involve us in a disgraceful brawl at a tavern?"

"I shall simply do as I promised," I replied, and caught hold of the bell-rope and gave it a pull. "Riquets, my dear fellow," said Mr. Pilfor, coming towards me, "we must floor this vulgar rascal and get out of his company."

Both of them came upon me together but I soon gave Riquets a blow that laid him sprawling, and would have sent his friend after him, when the door was opened by a waiter, who Mr. Pilfor no sooner saw than he caught hold of me and cried out help! help! with all his might. The noise brought more waiters, and Sykes himself, who came rushing into the room, when that villain Pilfor, who had caught hold of my collar, began to roar out that I had robbed him of his pocket-book, and Mr. Riquets, who just then picked himself up off the floor, swore to the fact, and added of his own accord that I had attempted to put a couple of the

spoons in my pocket, and had knocked him down for trying to prevent my escape. These unlooked-for accusations enraged me to such a degree, that I could not refrain from giving that rascal another blow which sent him a second time sprawling upon the floor. Unhappy for me this exhibition of violence only served to confirm in the mind of Mr. Sykes, the truth of what Pilfor and Riquets had told about me, and he and his servants caught hold of me and dragged me into the bar-room, where I was exposed to the gaze of all the company assembled there. As for Pilfor and Riquets, they availed themselves of the confusion to step out without saying any thing about the cost of the dinner, and when they were called to give their testimony against me, could not be found.

"You are a precious rascal, sir," said Mr. Sykes, the landlord, "to come into my house, without a dollar in your pocket, order a dinner of eight or ten courses, drink up my costliest wines and then walk off with my silver spoons in your pocket. I will have you in Bridewell for this. I have had many such a trick played upon me, and now I have caught one rogue he shall suffer for the whole."

This is the justice of the world. But I did not feel inclined to submit to the kind of treatment which Mr. Sykes was disposed to award me; so I related to him the entire trouble, which he seemed inclined to believe, the more so as neither Mr. Pilfor nor Riquets could be found to substantiate their charge, and the bar-keeper stated that it was Mr. Pilfor who had ordered the dinner. Still Mr. Sykes was quite unwilling to liberate me, for he thought it was quite time that somebody was made an example of to deter other rogues from imposing upon him, and the effect would be precisely the same whether I was guilty or innocent. I looked around among the people in the bar-room to see if I could meet a familiar face, but they were all strangers to me, and I was beginning to fear that I should either be compelled to send to Mr. Bassett for assistance or spend the night in Bridewell, when a gentleman who sat smoking a cigar close by with a

glass of brandy and water before him, spoke up and said, "It appears to me, Sykes, that you are acting in a very unbecoming manner towards the young fellow. I have not the pleasure of knowing him personally, but he has the manners of a gentleman, and I remember perfectly well seeing him one night at the Nunquam when he was swindled out of a costly supper by those rascals in the manner which he has stated, and I have no doubt that they attempted to gammon him again. Let him go, Sykes, and I will be responsible for his appearance to-morrow."

"Very well, very well," said Mr. Sykes, "if you wish, Mr. Wilton, I have nothing more to say about the matter. The gentleman is quite welcome to his dinner, if he cannot afford to pay for it, but as for his companions, I will put a stop to their marauding expeditions into other people's larders. Confound their luxurious appetites!"

"You are at liberty to go, sir, if you please," said the gentleman who had volunteered to be security for me, and whom Sykes called Mr. Wilton. "You understand, however, that I am bound for your appearance here to-morrow?"

"I am grateful for your kindness," I replied, "and will certainly be here any hour you or Mr. Sykes may appoint, for unhappily I have no business to prevent my coming. But there will be no good in coming back. I have no money to bring with me."

"Have you not, indeed?" said Mr. Wilton, puffing out a cloud of cigar-smoke. "That's bad. I am sorry for you. But you have friends, of course, who can assist you?"

"If I have they do not know where I am, nor that I need their assistance," I replied.

"Ah! indeed!" said Mr. Wilton, as though my situation were quite new to him. "No money. No friends. No home?"

"No home," said I.

"That's very bad, indeed. Very bad!" added Mr. Wilton, soliloquizing, as he knocked the ashes from the end of his cigar.

"Have the goodness to sit down by me until I smoke my cigar. Do you smoke? Ah, then you don't smoke! That's very well.

But I like a good cigar, myself, there's a kind of comfort in it. Old bachelors who are guiltless of the crime of matrimony must have some sins. But you drink?"

I shook my head.

"Well, that's better still. Drinking is a shocking bad habit. But I rather enjoy it, than otherwise; and as long as Sykes keeps such capital Otard, Dupuy & Co., I can't think of giving up my glass of brandy and water. Of course you don't gamble?"

"I never have," I said.

"Better and better still," said Mr. Wilton, "but still there is something very agreeable in the excitement of whist when there's just enough staked on the game to make it worth while to win. You do well to shun cards and dice, they are ruinous to young men; but as I have got no wife nor children, nor anything of that sort, a game of cards is a very necessary kind of excitement, and I am willing to acknowledge that I like gambling in moderation."

Mr. Wilton having made these confessions to me in a very ingenuous manner, remained for a few minutes entirely silent, apparently quite absorbed in watching the smoke which he puffed from his mouth, as it curled above his head. He appeared to be about forty years of age, he had a fine benevolent countenance, handsome features, and his nose was just enough exaggerated from the standard of nasal beauty to give an individuality to his face; his eyes were black and keen, but he wore spectacles; he had a lofty forehead, coal black hair which clung to his head in crispy curls, a broad manly chest, and altogether the air and manner of the kind of man who passes for a gentleman at first sight without any question being asked. His dress was peculiar, but not odd.

He wore a blue frock coat with a standing collar, and a buff vest buttoned close up in the throat, which gave him the look of a soldier, although there was a freedom in his manner which is rarely seen in one who has been taught how to carry his head and hands by a drill sergeant. He had a nobility of carriage which

was an inheritance. When he had smoked his cigar so that he could hold it in his mouth no longer, and drained the last drop of brandy out of his tumbler, he said, "Come, go to my room with me. I rather like you. I think there must be something very curious in your history."

I was but too happy to encounter a new friend, who seemed disposed to render me a service, and I very gladly accepted his invitation to accompany him to his apartment. "I must beg the favor of leaning on you, my young friend," said he, as we came out of Sykes' coffee-house. "I believe that I have got the gout in my right foot, and since I have felt a twinge this evening, I have been debating with myself whether the pain of the gout is not greater than the pleasure of drinking a glass of brandy-and-water. What do you think of it? But as you don't drink, and have never had the gout, of course you don't think about it at all?"

"True," I replied, "I have never had the gout; but as the penalty of every sin must of necessity exceed its pleasure, there can be no doubt that the pain of the gout exceeds the pleasure of the brandy."

"Well, upon my word," said he, "that's a view of the subject I never happened to take. You are right, of course. If the penalty did not exceed the pleasure of a transgression, why, we might always sin with impunity. But it's very clear that there is no remission of sin. Every transgression must exceed its penalty. Well, I will give up my brandy-and-water, and perhaps the other things. Faith, you have made me your debtor already. I must pay you for this. But here we are at my lodgings. Let us walk in."

The lodgings of Mr. Wilton were in an old fashioned brick house in Wall street. We struggled up stairs together, he leaning rather heavily upon my shoulder, and delivering himself of very gentlemanly and moral maxims all the while. There was no light in the hall, or passage way, but when he opened the door of his room, I perceived by the light that was emitted by a

small chamber lamp, that the house had been once a grand mansion, but it was now cut up into offices for printers, lawyers, attorneys, brokers, agents, editors, and all the tribe of nondescript laborers whose implements of business consist of an ink stand, a box of wafers, a few steel pens, a bundle of envelopes and a dusty writing desk. Mr. Wilton's room was on the second floor, and, from the appearance of the walls, had probably once been the parlor of the house; the walls were covered with French landscape paper, the cornices were heavy and constructed of wood, the windows wide, with deep casements, and the fire-place was ornamented with a richly carved Sienna marble mantel and set round with Dutch tiles, illustrated with Scripture subjects.

The furniture of the room corresponded with its decorations; from the ceiling hung a glass chandelier, with here and there a broken pendant, the sofas and chairs were of old mahogany, and almost as black as ebony, all of them having griffin's paws for feet. In one corner, there was a camp bedstead, and in the centre of the room a new writing desk placed on an old table which was filled with books and loose papers.

Mr. Wilton trimmed his lamp, lighted another cigar, stirred up his Liverpool coal fire, and seated himself in his easy chair.

"And so, my young friend," said he, "you have got no money, no friends, no home, and, by the way, no name, ha? I have not heard your name yet."

"Tom Pepper," said I.

"Tom Pepper!" said he, "what a remarkable name. Stop, I must make a note of that. Tom Pepper! Well, I never heard a better name for a good slashing magazine story. Is it real, or one that you have picked up?"

"I was born to it."

"Born to it. Born to a name. Well, I like that, too. Why that is in the regal style, I think, my young friend—you will be worth something to me, and I may be able to do something for you. Have you been to College?"

"No. But I have had a little instruction in College learning."

"Very good," said he, "and you know a little Latin and French, and Mathematics, and Greek?"

"No Greek," said I.

"And you have seen something of the world, too, I dare say."

"A little."

"And a very little, too, I perceive, or you would not have been taken in by those scamps Riquets and Pilfor. I know them well, the rascals; they took me in once."

"And you know so much of the world," said I.

"That's true. But you see, my young friend, that an honest man can never be on his guard against a rogue. Some people adopt the villanous rule of believing every man a rogue until he is proved otherwise; but I reverse the rule and trust that every man is honest until he is proved to be a scamp. That's the more gentlemanly and christian way, I think. How do I know, now, but that you are a rogue yourself?" And he eyed me very sharply, but seeing no appearance of a blush upon my face, he said, "pardon me my young friend, I know that you are what you seem. In fact there are some faces that carry a letter of recommendation with them, and yours is one of that kind. Give me your hand. Let us be friends. And now tell me your history."

I narrated to him in as brief a manner as I could the particulars of my past life, not without a good many interruptions from him, and ejaculations of, "You astonish me!" "You don't tell me so!" "How very remarkable," &c., &c.

At the close he said, "well my young friend you are just the person I want; why with such experiences as you have had, I would make a fortune by publishing my life in numbers. How very strange that nothing of the kind ever happened to me."

"I cannot remember at this moment that I ever met with a romantic adventure in my life. And yet I have been about in the world some too. But somehow or other it has always happened that everything has always gone on so smoothly with me that my course of life has never had a ripple in it. Something once

happened to a brother of mine, though, that was quite equal to any of your adventures, but all the rest of my family have done nothing but just live and die in the most ordinary manner, as I suppose I shall do too; our family have all been in comfortable circumstances. But I am fond of adventure, and every spring I make excursions with my dog and gun up in Orange county, but nothing ever comes of it."

"Pray what was it that befel your brother?" said I, feeling a curiosity to know what accident my new friend counted as so much superior to any that befel me, in point of romantic incident.

"My oldest brother," said Mr. Wilton, renewing his cigar, and resting his heels on top of the Sienna mantel piece, "when he left college took a fancy to make the tour of Europe, which was considered quite an undertaking in those days. Well, my father fitted him out with a letter of credit on the Barings, and letters of introduction all through Europe, from Liverpool to Constantinople. He started off in one of the old packets for London, for you know there were no steamships in those days, and we got letters from him by every arrival, dated at Paris, Naples, Rome, &c.; after a while the letters ceased, and we wondered what had become of him; but we had no fears of his being assassinated, or of his having fallen into the crater of Mount Vesuvius, nor anything of that sort, for, although he sent home no letters, he sent a plenty of drafts upon my father, which the old fellow grumbled terribly at having to pay."

"Well, my brother had been absent about two years, and my father was talking seriously of sending me to bring him back, when, to the astonishment of all, and my particular chagrin, we received a letter from master Bob, his name was Robert, informing us that he was on the point of being married to a lovely Countess, with whom he would embark for home in the next packet from Havre, in which he had already engaged his passage and forwarded his trunks and so forth. Such a piece of news as this put us all in the greatest ferment you can conceive of. The idea of Bob's marrying a Countess was amusing enough, and the terror

of my mother—rest her soul! she died yesterday a twelve-month—was laughable in the extreme.”

“What she was going to do with a Countess, how address her, and in what room to put her, formed the topic of our tea-table circle every night. My father, who was a cautious old fellow, went about everywhere asking what fortunes Countesses usually had, as a general rule, and whether they were related to the royal family or not; my sisters were delighted, of course, with the prospect of having a Countess for a companion, and as for myself, I was merely vexed at losing an opportunity of seeing Europe.

“We got no more letters from Bob, but we heard of the ship’s leaving HAVRE in which he had taken passage, and began to look for his arrival with great anxiety. The old house was newly painted and papered and a room fitted up expressly to put Bob and his Countess in. The whole family were dressed in new suits, and we were all in great glee, when our merry house was converted into a house of mourning by the intelligence that the packet in which my brother and his bride had taken passage was wrecked on Barnegat Beach, and every soul on board had perished. You may imagine our grief, but it is hardly worth while to attempt to give you any idea of it. Bob had always been a rather wild boy but he was a brave, generous hearted fellow, and in spite of his little excesses, I believe he was the favorite of the family, if he was not the flower of the flock.”

“After the first shock occasioned by this terrible news was over, my mother begged that some of us would go down to Barnegat and try to recover the body of my poor brother, as well as that of the Countess, whose name would look very handsomely on the family vault. My father would allow none of us to go without him, so he and my two brothers started off on their melancholy duty. It was in the winter season, and there would be no difficulty in preserving the bodies provided they could be found. Well, when my father and brothers reached the beach, there lay the ship, with a tremendous surf breaking over her, the trunks

of the passengers strewed about the shore rifled of their contents, and the bodies that had been found frozen stiff and buried in the sand without their clothes upon them. It was a melancholy task, of course, to disinter all these frozen corpses and find which of them had belonged to poor Bob, whose better part, we fondly believed to be in heaven. But it was a pious duty, and notwithstanding the freezing weather, they performed it without hesitation. After disinterring a good many, they at last discovered a body which they recognized as that of our unfortunate brother, from the color of the hair and its size, although it was considerably bruised. There had only two females floated ashore, and as one of them was black, and the other was the body of a young and handsome person, with beautiful golden hair, and had altogether a *distingue* appearance, they had no doubt of its being the corpse of the unfortunate Countess, and of course they took it, and having packed it in a box with brother Bob’s, started off for home. The grief of all the family was intense, you may be sure, for although Bob was a great annoyance to us from his extravagant habits, yet now that he was dead we mourned for him the more for having spoken rather harshly of him during his life time; and then there was something so tragic in the end he made, with the golden-haired Countess whom he was bringing home to us, who for aught we all knew, might have brought a fortune into the family. Well, they were both laid out in separate coffins, side by side in our parlor, where the whole city came to see them; there was no end to the poetry that was published in the papers about them; and the golden hair, the frozen strand, the storm, the wreck, the hapless bride, and all the horrors of the scene in which they perished were worked up in every conceivable form of verse. A funeral sermon was preached on the day of their burial, by our Dominie, who had married our parents and christened Bob, and a most affecting discourse it was, you may be sure; the Dominie rubbed up his reading and quoted almost the whole of Falconer’s Shipwreck in his sermon, and there was not a dry eye in the church, as there

never is on such occasions. The funeral was an immense procession, for Bob had a good many friends, and all the sentimental people in the city came to indulge in the tender thoughts which such an event naturally engendered. Well, sir, the funeral was over, the family had all gone into mourning, my mother, poor soul! had begun to look up again, and my father began to reckon up the time that must elapse before we should know definitively, as he expressed it, whether or not we should be any the better for Bob's marriage with a Countess, when, one night about a fortnight after the funeral, as we all sat in the parlor feeling very melancholy and trying to look cheerful, we were startled by a loud knock at the door, for they had knockers in those days; we all looked at each other in alarm, but no one could tell why. It was late in the evening, and it had been a cold, dull day, and it is not unlikely our spirits were affected by the weather. But let the cause have been what it might, we were all in a most drooping state, and there was something peculiar in the knock that seemed to go to our very hearts. I can't say that I have ever heard anything like it, unless it be the thundering noise which the marble spectre makes in *Don Juan* when he comes to settle accounts with that rascal."

"It seemed to us that the servant would never get the front door open, but at last we heard it turn on its old hinges, a gust of wind rushed through the hall and seemed to shake the whole house, and nearly extinguished the candles that were burning on the parlor centre-table. As we listened breathless to catch the next sound, and were fully prepared to hear something that would curdle the blood in our veins, if it were possible for such a phenomenon to happen, we heard as distinctly as we ever heard anything in our lives, a voice say, "Where is my father?" It was the voice of my poor brother Bob. There was no mistaking it, and I believe you might have knocked us all down with a marabout feather. Not a soul of us stirred or spoke a syllable; and the next moment the door opened, and who do you think appeared before us?"

"Why, your brother Bob, of course," said I.

"Why should you think so?" inquired he.

"Because, I saw from the first that he was not dead; you began by telling me that your brother Bob had met with a singular adventure, and there is nothing singular in a shipwreck and death."

"You are right, sir," said Mr. Wilton, "it was my brother Bob, and looking as well and *distingue* as he ever did in his life. He was so confounded good-looking, and rushed into my mother's arms so hastily, and kissed her so heartily, that we saw at once it was no ghost but Bob himself. However, his appearance was so sudden, that it caused a terrible uproar among us, and such hysterics as the women went into I could not give you the least notion of. There it was, Bob, dressed in the most *recherche* style, and with a pair of the most frightful looking moustachios. We were all so flustered, and Bob himself was so much astonished at the kind of reception we gave him, that it was a long while before he could understand what had happened to us; or we, what had happened to him. The whole thing was at last cleared up, by Bob's telling us that he had been left by the packet in Havre in which he meant to embark, and so had taken passage in the next one."

"And the Countess, Bob?" said my father, "what became of the Countess?"

"Don't mention her, father," said Bob, holding up both his hands, "don't mention her to me again. It was a regular sell."

"And were you actually married?" said my father.

"Thank heaven! no," said Bob, "I found out that my Countess was a — but never mind; I escaped two great perils at the trifling cost of a thousand francs, and here I am, a wiser if not a better man. If ever I do marry, I assure you it shall not be a Countess."

"Bob then sat down while one of us read to him all the odes and poems that had been written on his death. He said he had

not the least idea he was possessed of so many virtues as were attributed to him, and my father told him that we had all been equally astonished at the good qualities which had been discovered in him. And then my father told him he would have to keep a sharp look out on his future conduct, lest he gave the lie to his eulogists. It was afterwards ascertained that the bodies we had rendered funeral honors to were those of two steerage passengers, poor Swiss emigrants, so we had them taken out of our family vault and buried in Potter's Field. As for Bob, he is still alive and hearty, president of an insurance company and the father of a dozen children."

"And this," said I, "is the only romantic adventure that ever befell one of your family?"

"The only one," said he, "somehow or other, they didn't seem to be natural with us; and yet I am very fond of that sort of thing. I think I should like to lead exactly the kind of life that Sinbad the Sailor did, or Gil Blas, or the young man in the Golden Ass of Apulius, who, I have always thought, was more to be envied than any other man that ever lived. Although it would have been pleasant enough to lead such a life as Benvenuto Cellini did, excepting that I should not have cared about working in a goldsmith's shop; there was always something revolting to my mind in mere mechanical labor."

"If you were so fond of adventures," said I, "it appears to me a little strange that you should never have gone in search of them, for nothing can be more easy than to put yourself in a condition where you will be sure to encounter more marvellous and exciting accidents than any that you ever read of; for it is my opinion, from what I have read and what I have experienced, that men who relate their adventures always omit the most remarkable part of them, for fear of not being believed."

"Indeed! you amaze me!" said Mr. Wilton, "pray now, what should I do to meet with any of those surprising accidents which you think so common?"

"You have only to start off from here some morning," I replied, "step on board the first steam packet, ship or stage coach you meet, leave your trunk and your purse behind you, change your name, and ask some respectable looking person to lend you money enough to pay for your breakfast."

"There is some plausibility in what you say, I must acknowledge," said Mr. Wilton, "but suppose I should not be able to borrow money enough for my breakfast, what then should I do for my dinner? Hang me if I would be willing to go without my dinner for all the adventures in the world."

"I thought so," I replied, "people generally do that which is most to their mind, when they are let alone, and as you prefer the comfort of a good dinner and a quiet night's rest to the excitement of the wild adventures which appear so delightful to you, because they serve to beguile the time that would otherwise hang heavily upon your hands, you remain quietly at home in your snuggerly here, and delude yourself with the thought that you would fancy the life of a Knight Errant. But you may be sure, that those who are fond of adventures, and love the excitement of a vagabondizing life, are just as fond of reading about quiet fire-side scenes, and dreaming of the homely delights of a farmer's life, as you are of reading of wild adventures and the perils of the ocean and the forest. Sailors at sea lie awake, in their short watches below, and as they swing in their hammocks, beguile each other with pleasant stories of country life, and make vows that when they return to port they will make their way into the interior of the country, far away from the smell of salt water, and hire themselves out for shepherds or milk-men. But no sooner do they reach port, than they long again for the excitements and dangers of an ocean-life."

"There is something in that," said Mr. Wilton, "but my love for the romantic is——"

We were now interrupted by the appearance of a smutty-faced boy, having a paper cap on his head, who opened the door without rapping, and said, "they want some more copy."

"More copy," ejaculated Mr. Wilton, "why you little imp, what have they done with that capital manslaughter I sent them? But I forgot that I have been talking here these two hours, when I should have written a letter from London to be received by the packet that arrived this afternoon; and I have left all my memorandums in my brother Bob's office. Stop a moment. I will write a leader on the probabilities of a general war in Europe; and, my young friend, you take a pen and just write me off a free, dashing and humorous account of the occurrence of the dinner at Sykes's, and of the conduct of your friends, Riquets and Pilfor. It will be a capital chance for you to do them up very brown. Just be so good as to head your article with something that will catch the eye, as—A Scene at ———'s Hotel; or, How to get a Supper Without Paying for it."

"May I ask, for what purpose you want it?" said I.

"Why, I want it for my paper, of course. You know that I am editor of the Morning Luminary," said Mr. Wilton.

"Indeed, sir, I did not," I replied, rather frightened at finding myself on such familiar terms with the mysterious person who, under the shadow of his imposing "we," I had been used to consider one of the greatest men of the day; "and I am afraid that you estimate my abilities too highly, in believing me capable of writing anything worthy of being printed in your paper."

"Fudge, fudge," said he, reaching me a pen, and placing a quire of ruled paper before me. "Write out the account for me; it shall go in, and I may give you a place on the paper."

My ambition was excited by this promise, and taking the pen I wrote a plain account of the dinner at Sykes's, and headed it thus: AN EXPERIMENT IN DINING; OR, EATING AND NOT PAYING. By the time that Mr. Wilton had finished his leader on the prospects of a general war in Europe, I had finished my account of the dinner, and gave it to him.

"This," said he, "is the thing. There is a freshness, a vigor,

a simplicity, an earnest truthfulness in what you have written, which I am exceedingly pleased with. Here, boy, take this to the office and tell them to put it up, and let them fill up with any little horrible accident they can hit upon. I shall send them no London letter to-night."

"It is not possible," I exclaimed, "that you actually manufacture those foreign letters which I have often read with so much satisfaction, and with such entire faith in their truth."

"Of course I do," he said, as he lighted another cigar, "and I save by it a very handsome sum; the fact is, those London writers require such extravagant pay that we can't afford to employ them, and I, therefore, have to write my own foreign letters."

"I am amazed at it!" I said, "How can you do it?"

"O! it is not such a very difficult matter," said he, "a very little practice would enable you to write excellent letters from any part of the world."

"No doubt," I said, perceiving that he misapprehended me; "but how can you be guilty of such a piece of untruthfulness?"

"Untruthfulness! ha! ha! ha! Why, my young friend, a little experience in the business of instructing the public will soon give you correct notions on this subject. The object of publishing a newspaper, sir, is to make money, and as in all other trades, that course which is the most profitable is the most honorable."

"I thought it a very different thing," said I.

"Of course you did; people always form incorrect notions of things seen at a distance," said my new monitor; "when you walk on the Battery, for instance, of a bright afternoon, the Highlands of Neversink loom up across the bay like a great lump of lapis lazuli bathed in liquid gold, but when you approach them you discover that they are nothing but a heap of red sand covered with scrubby cedars. But I believe that I am making use of another man's idea, 'tis distance lends enchantment to the view,' as Campbell says; when you come to know a little more about

newspapers you will have more correct notions on the subject. I may say to you as the old statesman said to his son: go, my child, and see with how little wisdom newspapers are conducted. And this may be said of every profession. Mind, I do not mean to underrate the importance of my own calling, for it is one of the most dignified and responsible that a man can engage in, and to be tolerably successful, requires a much greater degree of knowledge, tact, information, industry and honesty, aye, honesty, than any other calling that I know of. A merchant or a lawyer may be secretly dishonest, but the newspaper editor cannot be, whatever he does wrong is done in the eyes of the world; his acts are all known, his thoughts are daily inspected by his readers, and this necessity of openness begets in him a habit of honesty which I think you will find no other class of men who labor for their living can pretend to. Whenever an editor is prosecuted it is for speaking his mind too freely, but the sins of other men are committed in secret.

I was charmed at this view of the editorial profession, and, in the warmth of my admiration for such a noble occupation, which led to such habits of candor, I exclaimed, "it is just the business that I have been looking for; I will be an Editor. I must have some trade which does not encourage lying."

"You shall," said he, seizing my hands and pressing them; "I am delighted with your ingenuousness and sincerity. I have long wanted to meet with a person of your character, and I am delighted to have found you. But, I am getting confounded thirsty; this cigar that I have been smoking has such a shocking flavor that I must take the taste out of my mouth. We will just have a drop of toddy. I have got some capital Glenlivet that was sent to me by that jolly good fellow, the Governor of Coney Island."

"Is there a Governor of Coney Island?" said I.

"Of course there is," said he, "and I only wish that every island has as good a one. The Governor of Coney Island is—but stop, you shall judge of him by the taste of his whiskey."

Mr. Wilton now drew a small iron-clamped oaken case from beneath his writing table, and, having unlocked it, took out a square cut glass bottle with a gilt stopper, a couple of tumblers, some lumps of sugar which were contained in a brown paper, two silver tea-spoons, and a fresh lemon. Having arranged these articles on the table, and shut up one eye to enable him to take an accurate view of the exact quantity of Glenlivet still remaining in the bottle, the sight of which seemed to give him such pleasure that he smacked his lips, while he contemplated the gift of the jolly governor. He drew a sauce-pan, filled with water, from a little nook behind the fire-place, and having stirred up the fire and replenished it with some fresh coals, set the sauce-pan on the grate to heat. As soon as the water boiled he mixed two tumblers full of punch, dividing the lemon between them, and making the mixture so sweet that I was quite unconscious of its strength until I began to feel it in my head after drinking my portion of it. During all the time of his preparing the punch he spoke not a word, being too much engrossed in the important business which seemed to give him very great delight. When it was all done, and he had tasted a drop to assure himself that it was quite right, he sat down in his chair with the air of a man conscious of having done something worthy of note, and pushing one of the tumblers towards me, said,

"There! taste of that you dog! Is it good, ha?"

"Very," said I. "It is equal to my father's rum punch which he used to make in the winter nights, when we lived together at Bloomingdale."

"I presume it is better," said he. "I do not take much pride in my leaders; but I think I may say without vanity that there is not a man of my years in the world who can mix a better tumbler of punch."

"Of course you do not mean that I should understand you to say that the composition of a leader is not a more dignified and honorable kind of labor than that of mixing a tumbler of punch?" said I.

"Of course not; but I was only thinking of how much greater pleasure I take in making the punch than in writing the leader."

"But in all our labors," said I, "we should think more of the good we are doing to others than of the pleasure which we derive from our work ourselves."

"I am not sure that your philosophy is sound," added he, at the same time adding a few drops of the Glenlivet to his tumbler; "I am beginning to think that no labor can be profitable to others which is not profitable to the laborer himself. And by profit, I do not mean pecuniary gain, but pleasure; for surely nothing can be counted profitable which is not pleasant. The days of asceticism are past, or, at least, they are passing away, and those of enjoyment are coming. I am rather doubtful, I must confess to you, whether I am justified in continuing in a profession which has so many more penalties than pleasures."

"And is the duty of an editor so severe?" said I.

"Severe, my young friend," said he, "that is not the proper word. Some stronger expression is needed. No body labors, in reality, but an editor; other men merely amuse themselves in their occupations; the merchant has a merry time of it; the lawyer trifles with his clients; the clergyman is but a grave idler, who has only to study to keep his countenance free from smiles; the mechanic and farmer, who literally live by the sweat of their brow, and breathe the pure air of Heaven, are the happiest of God's creatures; but the editor of a daily paper is a poor slave to the public; he works when other people are asleep, and never can know the luxury of taking an unconcerned view of human affairs. Let what will happen, in whatsoever part of the world, it can never be a matter of indifference to him; he must turn the matter over in his mind, and have his say about it. All is grist that comes to his mill, and whether a man be married or murdered, the editor must be equally interested in the event."

"He is happy to hear things every day that are perfectly

indifferent to him, and continually regrets to learn that events have occurred which he forgets the moment he has given utterance to such a thought, while he must be indignant at wrongs which he never felt and recommend measures and men of which he is profoundly ignorant."

"If that be the case, then," said I, "I think you have abundant cause to be dissatisfied with your occupation; and I do not see how you can reconcile it to your conscience to sacrifice so much of your time and happiness as it calls for."

"Precisely, very true; I have long viewed the subject in that light myself," said he, "but we are happy to have it in our power to announce —"

"To do what?" said I, looking up in his face.

"O, by the way," said he, starting suddenly, as though some idea had just occurred to him; "what was it that you observed just now, my young friend?" The next moment his head drooped, his eyes closed heavily, the half smoked cigar fell from his mouth into his shirt bosom, and he began to snore. The punch had overcome him; and I soon felt myself sinking beneath the same potent influence.

The room began to assume a strange appearance, the old furniture with which it was filled grew dim and indistinct, and the next moment I too was fast asleep.

It was day-light when I awoke, the fire had gone out, the smoky lamp was flickering and threatening to go out too; the room was in confusion and the air chilly; from the uncomfortable position in which I had been sleeping my legs were cramped, and I had a burning pain in my head.

Mr. Wilton sat in his easy chair, with his head resting upon the table, snoring very loud, and apparently sound asleep. His wig had fallen off, and he made such a ridiculous figure that I sat and laughed at his odd appearance, as I thought that the helpless object before me was the brilliant, learned, profound and sagacious editor whose daily observations on human affairs were so eagerly sought after by the public, and who talked of govern-

ors and statesmen as though they were children standing at his knee, and receiving lessons in life from a superior being. Well might he say to me, "go, my son, and see with what little character a newspaper may be conducted." But he was at least honest in his dishonest business. He pretended to nothing which he was not.

The gray light of the morning began to assume a warm hue, and hearing carts in the street, I knew that the city was awake; I rose up quietly from my resting place, and stole softly out of the room, leaving my new friend asleep in his chair, intending to return to him again after I had refreshed myself by a walk.

From the force of early habit, I still took pleasure in a morning ramble; the freshness of the air, and the vigorous looks of man and beast when they first rise from their night's rest and go forth to their labor, have always had a peculiar charm for me, and as soon as I left the apartment of the sleeping editor, I wandered down to the markets, the centres of morning life and bustle in a great city, where I remained longer than I intended to do, and as I was returning to the room of my new friend, I was accosted by a rough-looking man, who asked me my name.

"Tom Pepper," I replied, as usual. "O, ho!" said he, at the same time seizing me by the collar; "you are the very person I was looking for. Come, Mr. Pepper, you must go with me."

"Not unless I know who you are, and where you want me to go," I replied, endeavoring to free myself from him.

"You will find where I want you to go soon enough for your own comfort," said he, dragging me after him. But he found it was not going to be so easy a matter to compel me to follow him against my will. As a crowd began to gather around us, he told me that if I made any resistance he would call for help, and that nobody would dare to refuse him assistance.

"Tell me who you are, and take your hand from my collar, and I will go with you, but not otherwise," I said.

"As for who I am," said he, "you are welcome to know that; I am Jack Davis, the deputy constable of this city, and I am going to take you to Bridewell, where you will be kept until you can be tried for stealing a watch."

"Stealing a watch!" I exclaimed, in horror, "who accuses me of such a crime?"

"Who?" said he, "why the gentleman you took it from, of course, who else should?"

"Hallo! here's an item," exclaimed a voice that I recognized, and turning my head I perceived that rogue, Riquets, with a memorandum-book and a pencil in his hand. "What's the go, Davis?" said he.

"It is nothing but a young fellow who has been making love to a Mr. Wilton's watch," said the officer. "He has hardly had time to pawn it since he walked off with it."

CHAPTER III.

At the risk of being denounced as a radical and an innovator, I must assert that the laws which permit an innocent man to be locked up in a prison with rogues and poor debtors, are imperfect, and require amendment. At least, this was the opinion I entertained when I found myself locked up within the stone walls of the old Bridewell in the Park, without having committed any offence against the laws of the State. The officer who had arrested me, told me that I had been guilty of stealing Mr. Wilton's watch, and my angry attempts to convince him that I was innocent of the charge only seemed to confirm him in his opinion of my guilt. Finding that resistance was entirely useless, I at last suffered myself to be led into the prison, where, as soon as the key was turned on me, I was surrounded by a set of rascals who had just been let out of their separate cells into the long gallery on each side of which they were ranged. They crowded around me with eager curiosity, and began to enquire what I had been

doing; some of them offering me their sympathy, and others joking at my dejected appearance. It was sufficiently annoying to find myself among such a set of confirmed villains, who only laughed at me when I asserted my innocence of any crime; but I soon had to endure a still greater cause of vexation, which was only a prelude to other mortifications and misfortunes. I had not been long in the wretched place, when one of the turn-keys called me to the barred entrance to the cells, and on going to the door I beheld Mr. Pilfor accompanied by his friend, Riquets. The latter person nodded familiarly to me, but his tall friend only smiled at me, and then exchanged glances with his satellite. Mr. Riquets drew his cloak over his shoulders, with a stage strut, and throwing back his head, informed me in his peculiar jerking manner that as he had formerly known me, he had no wish to do me an injury in any manner, and that if I would pay him a certain sum he would prevent the particulars of my arrest appearing in the papers, and would see that my name was not mentioned in any manner to compromise my character. Of course I rejected this base overture with suitable indignation, and told him that I had no fears for the result of the strange accident which had led to my arrest as a thief.

"O! very well," said Mr. Riquets, "you are the best judge of the value of your own character; if you prefer seeing yourself in to-morrow morning's papers as a thief, to paying a trifle to prevent it, it is nothing to me; only as a friend to you, I felt myself bound to do you a good turn. So, good-bye to you. I shall be present at your examination before the Recorder."

With this parting speech these precious rascals took themselves off, and it was a relief to me to turn from such rogues at large to the comparatively honest rascals who were my fellow-prisoners. A young fellow among them, who had the appearance of a well-educated youth, and whose dress and manner certainly indicated a familiarity with genteel society, took me one side, and said that I had made a great mistake by not bribing Mr. Riquets, who was a reporter for many of the city papers, and had

it in his power to do me a vast deal of harm by giving a florid, if not a wholly false statement, of the particulars of my arrest. I replied to him that I was wholly innocent of the crime with which I was charged, and that there would be no difficulty in proving it; that to attempt to bribe a reporter to keep my name out of the papers would only strengthen the suspicion of my guilt, and that besides I had no money to bribe the rascal with, even though I had been disposed to listen to his infamous proposition.

"But what has become of the watch?" said the young fellow. "Of course you have not spent all the money you got for it; for I suppose you put it in pawn as soon as you got away with it?"

It was no use to attempt to convince this hardened young thief, for such he was, as I afterwards found, that I had not stolen a watch, and weary and disgusted I sat down on the floor to avoid the ribald conversation of the reckless rogues by whom I was surrounded. But it was some consolation to me, to know that I was among men who had the candor to confess all their villainies, and who were certainly no worse than they pretended to be; for they took a pride in reciting their feats of roguery, and those who had been guilty of the greatest enormities, were accounted the best fellows. The genteel looking young fellow who had advised me to bribe Mr. Riquets, I was shocked to find had been long guilty of robbing his employer, a merchant who trusted in his integrity, and whom he had nearly ruined by his robberies. As I sat revolving in my mind what would be the best course for me to pursue in my unfortunate position, I was called to the door again where I found Mr. Wilton, who immediately began to reproach me.

"I little thought," said he, "that I was warming into life such a specious scoundrel as you have proved. But I now find that you have not got your character of a romancer for nothing. Return me my watch, you scoundrel, and you shall have the full value of it in money, and I will not appear against you if I can avoid it. If you had asked me for money, you should have had

it. In fact, I had determined to make you a handsome present this morning, for you had so deceived me by your specious manners and plausible stories, that I must confess I was completely deceived by you."

I was at first so agitated by rage, to hear myself addressed in such a manner that I could hardly speak at all, but I at last told him that if he had lost his watch, I was wholly innocent of knowing what had become of it; that I intended to have returned to him when I was arrested by the police officer, and begged that he would see me out of prison, and not subject me to the mortification and disgrace of being tried as a criminal.

"It is of no use, you villain;" said he, shaking his fist at me through the bars of my prison door, "you need not deny it, for there is no room for you to escape. If there were even a doubt of your guilt you should have the benefit of it."

"But what are the circumstances? I fall asleep in my chair, with you sitting by my side; when I suddenly awake I see something stirring in the room, and, opening my eyes, discover you are just opening the door to go out; I call, and you make no answer, but hurry down stairs; the next moment I look up to see what the hour is, and the watch which I had hung up in the watch pocket above the mantel, is gone; thinking that I had neglected to hang it up, although I am certain of having done so, I feel for it in my vest pocket, and it is not there. Now, as the door had been locked on the inside, it was quite impossible for it to have been taken by any one but yourself; and coupling the circumstances with your stealthy disappearance, your former bad character, and your confessed penniless condition the night before, makes it certain that you stole the watch. I am exceedingly sorry that a young man of your really clever talents and interesting manners should have been guilty of this act, but really, as a good citizen, I am bound to see you properly punished. But still the watch was of great value to me, it was worn by my father many years, and contained the miniature of my mother; I would almost as soon have

lost my life, and for the sake of getting it back again, I will promise to do my best to have you set free, if you will confess what you have done with it."

I could only repeat what I had already sworn; but I saw that my denial had no effect upon him.

"My fine fellow," said he, "it will only be worse for you if you continue to deny your guilt, for I can promise you that you shall not escape the punishment you deserve, if there is any power in the arm of the law, and if Justice has not put the scales upon her eyes which she generally carries in her hands. But, let me reason with you; let me persuade you to act honorably in this matter. I can easily conceive that a youth like you, in want of money, brought up in the loose manner in which you have been, might have been tempted to take even an article of greater value than a watch; I could forgive such an offence, aye, even forget it, if you acknowledged your fault and made all the restitution in your power. But such obstinate villainy as you show in retaining the watch, when you know that I prized it infinitely above its intrinsic value, strikes me as one of the most atrocious instances of thorough scoundrelism in the whole annals of crime. I never heard any thing like it."

"I see," I said, "that circumstances are greatly against me, and I may be found guilty of the crime by a jury, and be condemned to punishment as a thief, and bear the reproach of having robbed my benefactor, but, I cannot help it; I can only swear to my innocence as before."

"Astonishing! astonishing hardihood!" he exclaimed. "Let me remind you of another thing; what you will lose by this yourself; not only personal liberty which must be very precious to one who has led such a vagabondizing life as yourself; but consider your loss of character, the loss of the esteem of your friends, of the confidence of those who even think you honest; think of your father, if he should be alive, think of the grief you will inflict upon him by your obstinacy, and of all the mortifications that may be spared to you by your confessing your crime. The

affair has not yet been made public, it can be all hushed up; you can be released from confinement, and I will pledge you my word that you shall have some honorable employment, in which you can retrieve your character, if you have honesty sufficient to behave yourself properly."

"Do not afflict me any more," I exclaimed, "you have tortured me enough already; it was not necessary for you to remind me of my misfortunes; I see that I must suffer, and that my past misconduct will be brought up to confirm my fault."

"Let me then," said he in, a softened tone, "make an appeal to those generous feelings, which I perceive are not already stifled in your youthful breast, it is a good sign to see you moved, those tears are real, and they convince me that you are not so bad as you seem. What have I done to you that you should injure me? I never wronged you, but on the contrary I would have done you good; I had taken a sudden fancy for you, and would have shared my last dollar with you; in fact, even now as much as I regret the loss of my watch, I solemnly declare to you that I am more moved at the sight of so promising a youth as yourself in this degrading place, I would freely part with my watch to set you free."

The other prisoners being attracted by the earnest expostulations of Mr. Wilton, came crowding into the passage to listen to him, and one of them called out in a gruff voice, "why don't you give the gentleman his watch, or tell him what you have done with it, you young scamp?"

"Do you hear that?" said Mr. Wilton. "Why you will be the scorn and contempt of your fellow-prisoners; they will despise you for your meanness. You will be hooted from the company of all honest men, and even thieves will disdain to associate with you."

"God knows," said I, "that I am innocent. And I can only trust that I may be able to convince you of it. You must think of me as you will until I can establish my character, but what to do I know not. I know not where to look for help, but I am

bound to advise my old benefactor, Mr. Bassett, of all my turns of fortune; so if you have really a desire to befriend me, let me beseech you to inform that good man of my trouble and where I am. He will not think me guilty when I tell him that I am innocent."

"Give yourself no trouble about Mr. Bassett," said Mr. Wilton; "that excellent gentleman has already been informed of your crime, and will soon be here to talk with you; and I hope that he may produce more effect upon you than I have been able to do."

Before he had fairly completed the last sentence, I looked up and saw Mr. Bassett standing by his side.

"Why, Tom," said Mr. Bassett, in his usually kind tone of voice, although he looked very serious, as he spoke, "what is the meaning of your being in this place?"

"It is owing to one of those strange accidents," I replied, "of which I have been the sport ever since I was born. I know nothing more than that I am accused of stealing this gentleman's watch, and am here by force."

"And you are not guilty?" said he.

"No," I replied, for my feelings would not allow me to say more.

"I believe you," said he; "you had no motive to rob, for you knew that when you were in want you had only to apply to me for aid, and that you would receive it."

"How, then, came he to be in want?" said Mr. Wilton; "he was penniless when I found him."

"'Tis but too true, and the fault was mine," said Mr. Bassett; "I permitted him to go from me, when I knew that he had no money in his pocket, because he did not solicit me for it."

"My poor boy," continued Mr. Bassett, "it is I who am the guilty person in this case; if I had not allowed you to leave me when I knew that you were in want of money, you would not be here. Forgive me, Tom. Keep up your spirits and you shall soon be released."

"Never, sir," said Mr. Wilton; "he shall never come out of prison until he restores my watch to me. You may believe him innocent, but I know him to be guilty."

"We will see, sir," said Mr. Bassett, with more of passion than I had ever before seen him exhibit; "we will see about that, sir. Go back, my boy, to your cell, and give yourself no further trouble. You shall be released from this place, soon."

"Not if I am alive!" said Mr. Wilton; "I will not be robbed of my property without having the satisfaction of seeing the thief punished, if there is any such thing as law."

"I will stake my life on his innocence," said Mr. Bassett, with increasing warmth, "and if there is any justice in law, he shall not be kept in prison."

The two gentlemen left the prison together, and I felt very little hope of being released, notwithstanding the confident tone of Mr. Bassett's assertions, for I saw that the circumstantial evidence against me was very strong, and Mr. Wilton's anger was thoroughly roused. I went back again to the further end of the prison, that I might be free from observation, and out of hearing of the other prisoners, who persisted in believing me guilty, and encouraged me in their rude way to hold out and not confess my crime. I had not been there long, when I heard my name again called, and going to the bars had the mortification to find there Sophia Ruby and Wilson Goodwill. It was a mortification to me to see these persons, because I knew by their coming to see me, that the fact of my imprisonment had become notorious, and I dreaded to think that Pauline should hear of my disgrace. But there was nothing in the manner with which these excellent people greeted me, to make me feel that I was in a situation which is ordinarily considered a degrading one. Mrs. Ruby reached her hand through the bars and pressed my hand very kindly, and smiled upon me more tenderly than she had ever done before. "You are very good to come and see me in my disgrace," I said, "I am grateful for your kindness, which is not wholly undeserved, for I will swear to you that I am not guilty

of any crime which should cause me to be sent to this place, and am wholly innocent of that which I am accused of."

"Thee is perfectly right to say so; I would if I were in thy place," said Wilson; "but we did not come to hear thy confessions; Sophia and I just dropped in to say how does thee do, for we heard thou was here, and it happened to be the first time we have known where to call upon thee."

"It makes no difference to me," said Mrs. Ruby, "whether you are guilty or not; I am not your judge; and I do not see why it should make any great difference whether you or we stand on the other side of this ugly barred door; we bear the same spiritual relation to each other; there are many men who deserve to be in prison, and I am sure that the accident of their not being there does not increase my respect for them. Whether you be guilty or not is not my business; you are a human being like myself, and I know that you have not injured me. I fear that there are not many objects of the beautiful in this place, so I have brought you something to refresh your inner life."

From her allusion to internal refreshments, and seeing her put her hand into her pocket, which apparently contained something heavy, I concluded that she had brought me a flask of brandy or some kind of cordial, which would have been a very acceptable present at that moment, for I had not entirely recovered from the effects of the whiskey punch which I had drank the night before. But Mrs. Ruby's refreshments were always of a nature purely spiritual, or, as she sometimes called it, æsthetic. I was a good deal disappointed when I saw her draw from her pocket a porcelain sheep instead of the expected flask.

"This is a beautiful type of innocence," she said, holding up the piece of crockery; "it was presented to me by a German friend. I think that the mouth has a remarkable expression of innocence."

"It has certainly as sheepish a look as it would be possible to give to porcelain, Sophia, I think myself," said Wilson. "If friend Pepper should take it into his cell with him he would not

be able to think of any thing but mutton while he remains here."

"I think that the beautiful should be introduced into all our places of confinement," said Mrs. Ruby; "the influence of beautiful objects on the minds of the depraved cannot but have a refining effect."

"As for that matter," said I, taking the toy in my hand, which she reached through the grated door, "if objects of beauty had the effect which you attribute to them, I do not see why there should be any such thing as depravity in the world, for surely the earth has always been full of the most beautiful objects, and, so far as I can remember, mankind have always been the most grovelling where the earth has been most liberally garnished with beauties."

"Ah! but you confound merely natural objects with the works of art," said Mrs. Ruby; "you do not mean to deny the elevating effects of music and painting."

"I can only say," I replied, "that so far as my own observation has gone, musicians and artists, are the least elevated class of men that I have known; and if an art will not elevate those who practice it professionally, I do not see how it can have such an effect upon the mere amateur. You would not pretend to say that the inhabitants of Rome and Florence, who live in what is called an atmosphere of art, surrounded by the finest examples of sculpture, painting and architecture, and listening continually to the choicest music in the world, are so elevated in their morals, so pure in their philosophy, so rational in all their actions, as the inhabitants of our country villages who live in mean wooden houses, see no pictures but the head of Washington or Lafayette on a sign-board, and hear no music but the dismal wailing of a church choir?"

"Why, as to that matter," said Mrs. Ruby, "I believe there is an all-pervading sense of the sublime in our natures, which surrounds us like circles and encloses us within its spiral influence, until we are elevated by it to a higher stand-point than that which

is occupied by baser spirits. There is always a yearning after the infinite and the beautiful in all nature, and I was struck on my way here at seeing a young chimney-sweep listening to the tones of a hurdy-gurdy which was played by one of those dark-eyed children of the south, who bring to us from their sunny Italy, those little plaster images so redolent of art and beauty."

CHAPTER IV.

"All that is unquestionably very prettily said," I replied; "but it has always appeared to me that a love of nature is much more ennobling than a love of art, and that those who do not love nature first can have no real love for that which is at best but an imitation of it. This little porcelain lamb that you have so kindly bestowed upon me, might, if I were shut up in a dungeon, be a pleasant object to gaze upon, but a real sheep would be infinitely more so."

"Perhaps," suggested Wilson, "then thou would prefer a dead sheep even to a live one, particularly if it were dressed, for so the butchers call an animal, I believe, when they have taken its skin off and left it in utter nakedness. In short, thou art fond of mutton chops, I perceive, friend Pepper."

"To say the truth, I am," I said, "and I must confess that my mouth waters to hear you name them, for I have eaten nothing for my breakfast yet, as the prison fare is not altogether to my taste."

"I can have but little sympathy with tastes which are so purely animal," said Mrs. Ruby; "I think that the soul should rise to a plane that is elevated above mere animal appetite."

I had no disposition to offend Mrs. Ruby; indeed, I was so far from feeling any, that I loved her for the simple-hearted kindness she had manifested by coming to visit me in a place which ladies generally avoid. It was a loving nature that had prompted her to bring me an offering in my confinement of what she looked upon as an object of beauty; and an amiable desire to render

herself agreeable, had no doubt induced her to increase her personal attractions by the application of a little rouge to her cheeks, and some kind of liquid dye to her hair. She was not an accomplished artist, it is true, and from a lack of skill had failed to conceal the art of her making up, so that the effect she aimed at was not obtained. But her motives were good, and she appeared to me in a very amiable and agreeable light. But I could not help at last smiling at the extreme oddity of her opinions, and at the contrast which she offered by her finery and simplicity, to the subdued cunning of Wilson. There appeared to be some hidden bond of union between these oddly matched persons which puzzled me a good deal. When Mrs. Ruby discovered that I was laughing, she blushed very red, but said good naturedly. "I see that you are ridiculing my strange notions, but I do not, of course, expect that you should see truths with my eyes."

"It is true," I replied, "that I was laughing at what you have been saying to me, for it sounds so oddly, and I can discover so little in it that I can comprehend, and it sounds so strangely to hear one talk palpable nonsense with so grave a countenance that I could not help it."

"I admire your candor, Mr. Pepper," said Mrs. Ruby, "although I see nothing to admire in your philosophy. It is not strange that one who can be so blind to spiritual enunciations, should have been so indifferent to the simple rules of right and wrong, as to take the property of another person and appropriate it to his own use. For my part I have great charity for criminals of all kinds, and, indeed, I cannot say that I have ever felt a strong regard for any, but the oppressed and degraded; but still, I think that there should be a limit to our sympathy even for those who are in your situation."

"Madam," said I, seriously, "you address me as though I were guilty of the crime of which I am accused!"

"As I said before," she replied, drawing her shawl closely around her, "it is a matter of indifference to me whether you be or not. You have not robbed me. But they rarely put people

in prison for their good deeds; if you should be sentenced to a long confinement, the Secretary of the Prison Society, of which I am a member, shall visit you."

"Thee is in good hands, friend Pepper," said Wilson; "but if I were in thy place, I should do as thou does and deny my guilt, because somebody may believe thee, particularly those who do not know thee. But thou has not forgotten of course, the trifling mistake thou made one day, in walking off with my entire suit of clothes. Thee is welcome to them; but Sophia and I have not forgotten the fact, and if thou shouldst remember it, it would be advisable not to say anything about it on thy trial, because it might prejudice the minds of the jury in regard to the present charge against thee, which thou says is not true."

I gave the rogue of a quaker an indignant glance, and was going to reply to him in a becoming manner, when a noise of struggling was heard in the passage way, and I stopped to ascertain the cause. I heard the clinking of the keeper's keys, and the voices of Mr. Bassett and Mr. Wilton, and I began to tremble lest these two gentleman had got into a broil respecting my innocence. Directly afterwards they came in sight, and rushed simultaneously towards the grated door, both of them in a state of great excitement and high perspiration. "Open the door quick," exclaimed Mr. Wilton, "open the door that I may myself take him out of this shocking place. Be quick, Mr. Keeper. Why how you stumble along. Will you never open the door?"

"Be patient, Tom; be quiet, my son, one moment longer," said Mr. Bassett, panting as he spoke.

"He shan't be patient a moment, not the shadow of a second," said Mr. Wilton, "why, I wonder if he will ever forgive me. Come out! come out, you precious fellow, come out!" shouted Mr. Wilton, in the most excited manner as the turnkey threw open the door. And thrusting aside Mrs. Ruby and Wilson, who were quite confounded at this exhibition, I found myself suddenly siezed by Mr. Bassett and Mr. Wilton, who dragged me out of the prison down into the front yard.

"You are free, Tom," said Mr. Bassett, "you are free to go where you please."

"He is not free," said Mr. Wilton, as he clasped his arms around my neck, "he is my prisoner, I claim him as such, and I will keep him the rest of my life, unless he runs away from me like an ungrateful fellow. But, I declare, I have a good mind to go back into the prison myself, and remain there a week, as a retribution for my stupidity."

Such was the suddenness of my liberation from prison, and so excited were Mr. Wilton and Mr. Bassett, as they hurried me down the stone steps and through the yard which enclosed the Bridewell, that I had no time to ask any questions, nor could I understand the meaning of the hurried remarks of my liberators. A hackney coach was standing in front of the prison, and into it they thrust me; they were about to follow me, when, turning my head, I saw at a distance the same person whom I had already encountered twice before, standing and gazing towards me, with his arms folded, who bore so strong a resemblance to Captain St. Hugh. I was determined now to speak to him, and I attempted to jump out of the carriage, but Mr. Bassett caught hold of my arm, and Mr. Wilton grasped me round the neck so firmly, that, in spite of my exertions, I found it impossible to escape, and I had the mortification of seeing the gentleman turn and walk away, and in another moment he was out of sight.

"Come, come, my fine fellow," said Mr. Wilton, "don't flatter yourself that you are at liberty yet. I have got charge of you now."

But he said it so good-humoredly that I perceived he had no intention of putting any restraint upon me. They both got into the carriage, and Mr. Wilton ordered the hackman to drive to Sykes's.

"I suppose," said I, "that you have found the real thief."

"Yes, I have," replied Mr. Wilton, "and the watch too, and here it is. And now who do you think the thief was? But you

couldn't guess, for he is in the carriage with you. It was I. I stole the watch myself. Such a piece of stupidity is without any parallel in the whole annals of crime; but, no: there was no crime about it but the crime of accusing you of doing it. Upon my soul, Mr. Pepper, I don't think I can ever forgive myself, and as for you I hope you will never think of forgiving me, because I don't deserve it. If I were in your place I would certainly shoot any man who put such an indignity upon me as I did upon you."

"But you have not explained to him how the mistake occurred," said Mr. Bassett.

"Very true, very true," said Mr. Wilton; "you see, Mr. Pepper, that yesterday I happened to break my watch chain, so I dropped in at Demilt's when I was going to my brother Bob's office, to get it mended, and left it there with my watch, meaning to call for in the evening. Now, it so happened that I had no occasion to look at the time through the day, and having dropped asleep by accident in my arm chair, after drinking that confounded Glenlivet that Gil Davis sent me, I did not discover that my watch was not in my pocket, for I always make it a point to wind it up before going to sleep, and then hang it up in the little embroidered case over the mantel-piece, which my brother Bob's oldest daughter made for me when she was at boarding school. So, when I woke up this morning, I naturally looked up to see what time it was, and not seeing my watch in its place, I felt for it in my pocket, and not finding it there, what could I think but that you had taken it?"

"What? Why I see no necessity for your thinking so," said I.

"Well, I am glad to hear you say so," said he, "for I shall feel very uncomfortable if you don't show some signs of resentment for the manner in which I have used you. However, there *was* a necessity for it, because the thought was purely spontaneous, and once having taken possession of my mind, it prevented me from recollecting what I had done with my watch.

In fact, I am really not so much to blame, after all, for according to the psychological law of the human mind, it cannot entertain two different thoughts at the same time; therefore, while I was thinking that you had run off with my watch, I could not, of course, be thinking that I had left it the day before at the watch-maker's. Full of the thought that you had robbed me of my precious time keeper, I went into Demilt's to inform him of my misfortune. 'Well,' says I, 'Demilt, my watch is gone,' 'Gone!' exclaimed Demilt, opening his eyes very wide. 'Yes,' said I, 'a young thief, whom I took into my room last night out of charity, ran off with it this morning.' 'Well, that is very remarkable,' said he, 'I thought that this was your watch,' and so saying he handed me my highly valued time piece."

"How did you feel, when you saw it?" inquired Mr. Bassett.

"Why, sir, I was so tremendously mortified that I didn't feel at all. I was completely overwhelmed. You might have knocked me down with a feather as easily as with a sledge-hammer," said Mr. Wilton. "Of course, I then remembered where I had left my watch the night before. I came out of Mr. Demilt's wishing that the sun might be suddenly eclipsed so that nobody should see me, for I thought that everybody would be looking at me and laughing at my folly; fortunately I met with Mr. Bassett who was just going in company with ———"

"Another gentleman," said Mr. Bassett.

"Very good, yes; another gentleman," said M. Wilton, exchanging glances with Mr. Bassett, to bail you out of prison; and when he heard that the watch had been found and everything about it, we jumped into a hack and started off together to free you from your unpleasant situation. Now, my fine fellow, I am desirous of making some reparation to you for the harm I have done you. I am most confoundedly sorry that I can do nothing better for you than to offer you a situation on my paper."

"You could not do him a greater service," said Bassett, "and I hope Tom, that you will have the prudence to accept of the offer."

"Most cheerfully," I replied, "I am only afraid that I shall not be able to render myself useful to him."

"Never fear that," said Mr. Wilton, "I have seen enough of you to be convinced that you have just the kind of talents that I require. But what is more desirable to me than all, you are fresh in your manner of thinking, and vigorous in your style of expression. Beside, your candor is really something new and entertaining. The mere mechanical routine of the business you will soon make yourself perfectly familiar with, while your originality of thinking, and freedom from the common-places of the press will make your services invaluable to me."

"Let it be understood," I replied, "that I do not accept of the situation as an offset from you for the wrong done me. If my services do not prove profitable to you, I will not stay with you."

"Very well, very well. I like that," said Mr. Wilton. "I will engage you on those conditions; and as to the offset for the wrong done you, why I would give you this watch if it had not been a dying gift from my father. But you shall have one quite as good."

"No, no," said Mr. Bassett. "Tom will not accept one from you; but he shall from me. You shall have a watch Tom, and I would add to it a portrait of old Sir Eustace St. Hugh if I could. But perhaps it is better that you should forget him, and be the founder of your own fortune."

"I have determined to found my own fortune if I can," I replied, "but I do not know how I shall do it; as for old Sir Eustace I fear I shall never see his estate, or be permitted to assume his name, but until such a piece of good fortune befalls me, I shall try to make the name of Tom Pepper more respectable than it is now."

"That's a brave resolution, my fine fellow," said Mr. Wilton, "and I will not hide the fact from you that there is rather a bad odor about the name now, which this most unlucky imprisonment will not have the effect to lessen. But here we are back again to Sykes's. Let us go in and have some dinner. Confound that

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Glenlivat, I have felt it twitching in my gouty toe all the morning. It is such subtle stuff that the moment I imbibe the least drop of it, it runs like quicksilver to my extremities; one half of it runs down to my toes and the other flies into my head; so that it completely trips me up. I must beg the favor of leaning on your shoulder. So, hereafter, I will let the Glenlivat alone and stick to my old friends Otard, Dupuy & Co.; brandy is the only gentlemanly, respectable drink after all. Mr. Sykes," said he to the keeper of the Hotel, as we entered the bar room, which smelt as strongly of cigar smoke as it had done the night before. "Now, Sykes, my old boy, you must give us the best dinner that your *cuisine* can produce, for three. But, by the way, Mr. Pepper, just make out a catalogue of the dishes you would like, for I suppose that by this time you feel like eating everything in Sykes's larder."

I declined the privilege of choosing my dinner, for I was so hungry that nothing eatable would have come amiss to me.

"Don't order your dinner for three," said Mr. Bassett, "my good lady has exacted a promise from me to dine at home to-day."

"Nonsense," said Mr. Wilton, "I would like to see any good lady exacting a promise from me."

But Mr. Bassett was resolute, and he whispered in my ear not to drink too much, and took his leave.

"Never mind," said Mr. Wilton, "I am determined upon ordering a dinner for three, and perhaps I shall light upon some clever fellow to share it with us before it is ready. Now, Sykes, let me look at your larder. Upon my soul, it is a fine sight. There is a noble saddle of bear's meat, venison, canvass backs, woodcock, wild turkeys, pigeons, sea bass, and prize beef. I think we can pick a little something out of all these delicacies. Let me see, Sykes, give us some Shrewsbury oysters and a lemon to begin with, in the shell, of course; oxtail soup, if it is very good; venison steaks on a chafing dish, and plenty of jelly; half a dozen woodcock, and then canvass back ducks. Pastry and

a dessert, and a bottle or two of champagne, and a decanter of Otard, Dupuy & Co. Don't imagine that I dine in this manner every day, my young friend; for the fact is, I am forced to be rather abstemious on account of my sedentary habits; and, by the way, as this is to be a particular occasion, one not likely ever to recur again, I will indulge myself in just a drop of Glenlivat, and after this I will forswear it altogether. In fact, I believe that a reasonable quantity of that kind of drink is very excellent, as a corrective, after eating a hearty dinner."

So in addition to the already formidable order, a bottle of Glenlivat was ordered, with hot water, sugar and lemons.

"And now," said he, "as it will be half an hour before dinner will be ready, I will just smoke one cigar, although I am not in the habit of smoking, generally, before dinner. The practice is a very bad one, I know, and I am happy that you are not addicted to it; but just one cigar, and a mild one, too, on a special occasion like this, will not do much harm."

As Mr. Wilton lighted his cigar and sat down, I was rather annoyed to see my old friend, Mr. Ferocious, enter the bar room accompanied by a gentleman who proved to be Mr. Tibbings.

"There are two remarkable persons," said Mr. Wilton, "I do not think that I ever heard of a more singular attachment than that which exists between those very individuals."

"Then you know Mr. Ferocious?" said I.

"Know him?" repeated Mr. Wilton, in a tone which implied his astonishment at the supposition of his not knowing him. "Of course I do, and a most diverting character he is. If he were not with Tibbings, I would invite him to dine with me, but I cannot have one without the other, or at least I cannot have Tibbings without I invite Ferocious. Look at them. Now they are going to drink a glass of port wine bitters together. See with what reverence Tibbings bows to his substance, for he is but the shadow of Mr. Ferocious, and how like a conscious idol Ferocious himself receives the adulation of his worshipper. Ferocious, sir, is one of those rare specimens of humanity who are only

endurable for their rarity, just as one monkey is an amusing companion, but half a dozen of the simia tribe would be an intolerable nuisance. Yet Ferocious has a few good points in his character."

"So has a monkey," said I.

"Well, there is something in that; but Ferocious is really a fellow of some talent."

"And pray," said I, "did you ever know a man who had not some talent?"

"Well, as to that matter, perhaps not; but what I mean about Ferocious is that he has some of the talents he pretends to; his friend Tibbings there gives him credit for all that he pretends to and I believe a little more, which is altogether the most wonderful instance of delusion that the whole annals of literature can furnish. Ferocious is the author of one book which nobody but Tibbings has read, and on the strength of that one work, ———"

"The adventures of Christopher Cockroach, is it not?" I asked.

"Yes, you are right. And you have heard of the book! Well that is really wonderful. But pray have you read the Adventures of that wonderful person, Christopher Cockroach?"

I assured him that I never had, but that I had made the attempt.

"Ah! that is precisely my case," said Mr. Wilton; "as Mr. Ferocious is my personal friend, and an American author, I have actually imposed upon myself the reading of his book as an imperative duty, but in spite of myself I cannot do it. A poor devil of a reporter once called upon me for assistance and said he was willing to do anything for the sake of earning an honest living, and to encourage him I agreed to employ him for a week; so I thought I would try an experiment; I accordingly took the copy of Christopher Cockroach, which the author had sent me in the most obliging manner, and told the poor devil of a reporter to read it through and make me a brief analysis of the story. Well, sir, although the man was actually in a starving condition,

with a wife and small family dependent upon his exertions for their support; after trying a whole day he came to me and said he must resign his situation; he said he was willing to do any thing in reason, but as for reading the book I had given him he couldn't do it; he would sooner starve. Now, I think that the man who can write a book which nobody can read, is a more remarkable author than he who writes a book which is read by everybody."

"But," said I, "you say that Mr. Tibbings has read his friend's book!"

"True, very true, I did say so, and I have been told that he has gone to the extent of reading it twice; but the fact is I do not believe he has ever read it at all, for although Tibbings is a very good fellow, and really a man of some energy of character, yet I do not believe he is a Hercules, and nothing short, I am sure, could ever accomplish such a task. But, we are not likely to have the pleasure of Mr. Ferocious' company at dinner. He and his shadow are going. Well, I am sorry for it. It is really amusing to me to hear Ferocious talk; he is so sublimely egotistical, that, I must confess, I relish his company. However, we can do without him, a good dinner is of itself good company, as my brother Bob says, and even a bear when he is roasted and served up with a plenty of jelly is by no means an unpleasant companion to sit down to; and those dumb creatures, oysters, when they are broiled are really good fellows to be acquainted with; and we may spend a pleasant evening with no other company than a cigar and a bottle of wine. We bachelors are obliged to make social companions of everything and anything."

As my thoughts were never long absent from Pauline, and I could not conceive of being happy without being in the society of that darling creature, I could not help replying to Mr. Wilmot that hungry as I was, and with a keen relish for the luxuries he had named excepting only the cigars, which I abominated, I would much prefer a dinner of bread and water if shared with those I loved to the greatest delicacies in the world eaten alone.

"Why the fact is, Mr. Pepper," said my new friend, "there is a great diversity of opinions and feelings in respect to such things. Now, there's my brother, Bob, who was forever getting married, as you see by his affair with the Countess; he must be always head over heels in some domestic scrape, or other, with his hands full of children, and parties for his wife's relations, and all the multifarious engagements growing out of a large domestic connection; but for myself there was never anything half so pleasant as a nice quiet room with a good fire, a cigar, a glass of wine, a new novel and sometimes a quiet friend. By the way, what a remarkable circumstance it is that when you think of any one he is sure to appear to you; I was that moment thinking of my quiet friend Woollish, and there he is, just in time to join in our dinner."

A rather stout gentleman with light curly hair, who wore a blue-frock coat covered with braid and frogs, and a white Marseilles vest buttoned close up to his chin, and with an umbrella in his hand and a book under his arm just then entered the bar-room, and walking up to Mr. Wilton shook him by the hand and made some slight remark about the weather.

"Woollish," said Mr. Wilton, "allow me to make you acquainted with my friend Mr. Pepper."

I rose to salute Mr. Woollish, who first deposited his umbrella and book on a chair and then extended his right hand to me, while with the left he raised his blue cloth cap. After this ceremony was over we took our seats again, and my new acquaintance said to me, "I believe there is nothing new in literature?"

To this half interrogation I replied that I had heard of nothing, but that I was not in the way of knowing much about the occurrences in the literary world.

"I suppose," said Mr. Woollish, without seeming to heed my reply, "that you prefer the quiet style of literary composition."

I replied that I could hardly pretend to have formed any tastes in literature, and that I generally found something to interest me in every author.

"I think Cowper is one of the greatest of the English poets," said Mr. Woollish. "I like the quiet movement of his verse, and his happy domestic subjects. Rabbits and tea-kettles, and the heel of an old shoe, and a soft sofa are very pleasing themes for a poet; such subjects have a soothing effect upon the mind."

"Why as to that matter," said Mr. Wilton, "I think, Woollish that you are in error, so far, at least, as Cowper is concerned. I think that in the whole annals of British poetry there is nothing so violently exciting as the race of John Gilpin."

"I cannot say positively as to that particular poem," said Mr. Woollish, "as I have never read it. The subject is not suited to my taste, it is altogether too violent; but there is nothing finer in the whole range of English poetry than the lines on the feather curtains of Lady Montague. What is your opinion," continued Mr. Woollish, turning to me, "of Gray's Elegy?"

"It is a very good Elegy, for a country church yard," I replied; "but I think the world would hardly have felt the want of it if it had not been written."

"What did you say is the name of your young friend?" said Mr. Woollish turning to Mr. Wilton.

"Pepper," said Mr. Wilton. "Now don't attempt to make a pun upon the young gentleman's name, Woollish."

"Of course I shall not," said Mr. Woollish, "but I was going to remark that if he would mix a little attic salt with his pepper it might assist him to appreciate the quiet poetry of England."

"Very good, that's most capital, Woollish; but, do you know that my brother, Bob, said something very similar to it the other night at a party?"

At this point I was greatly delighted by the appearance of Sykes, who came in with a flushed face to say that dinner was ready, and that the soup was done to a bubble, for I was dreadfully weary of the conversation of Mr. Woollish who was as quiet in his manner as he was in his literary tastes. I had taken him at first for a military gentleman from the peculiarity of his dress, but I perceived that he was one of those persons who take

pride in appearing to be the reverse of what they are, and that he wore a sort of military undress because his habits were altogether unlike those of a military man. As we walked from the bar-room into the little dining parlor, Mr. Woollish took occasion to ask me whether or not I had read his last work entitled, "A few calm Thoughts on Literary Criticism," and on my saying that I had not; he added, "you have heard of it, of course?"

But I was obliged to acknowledge that I had not even heard of it.

"Then, I presume that you are not a literary man;" said Mr. Woollish.

"Not yet, but he soon will be," said Mr. Wilton; "I have engaged him for an assistant on my paper, Woollish, and you will see traces of his pen to-morrow. But come, be seated; the soup is getting cold. Now close the door, Sykes, and don't allow us to be disturbed unless the house should take fire, and don't in that case, unless the danger should be imminent. You must excuse me, Woollish, if I help our friend here first, because I have reason to know that he has had no breakfast and his appetite must be rather keen. What a delicious aroma arises from this tureen!"

"Don't give me any, I beg of you; it is too gross; such food is apt to excite strong passions in a man of my temperament. I will drink a glass of water while you are eating your soup," said Mr. Woollish.

"Don't drink water," said Mr. Wilton, "allow me to take a glass of brown sherry with you."

"I could not consent to it with consistency," replied Mr. Woollish, "it is a kind of drink that has too sensible an effect upon my system; I will drink part of a glass of hock, provided they have any green glasses in the house, otherwise I shall be compelled to decline pledging you in anything stronger than water."

It happened that there were green glasses in the house, and also some fine old hock, and Mr. Woollish deliberately drank our

healths out of a dismal looking green goblet and seemed to enjoy it. The reason of his singular taste, I did not learn.

After the soup came a succession of rich dishes which I partook of without much discrimination, and listened alternately to the comments of Mr. Wilton on the cookery and wines, and to the remarks of Mr. Woollish on the quiet style of poetry, which seemed to be the only passion that he indulged in. After the dinner came cigars, which Mr. Woollish did not object to, because they were gentlemanly and quiet; and he and Mr. Wilton got engaged in an incomprehensible dispute about the merits of some poet of whom I had never before heard, and I got into a very profound and comfortable slumber which I enjoyed greatly.

It was nearly dark when I was aroused by Mr. Wilton, who shaking me by the shoulder said, "Come, my young friend, wake up; it is time to go to the office and prepare a leader for to-morrow. Rise Cynthia, rise!"

As I was enjoying the delights of an interview with Pauline in my dream, and had been alternately visited by visions of that young lady and Desire Goodwill since I fell asleep, I was not very well pleased on being disturbed so roughly, and to be so suddenly transported from a chamber of bliss to the dining room of Sykes' Hôtel, which was filled with tobacco smoke and looked in the dim twilight as gloomy as the cavern of despair. The feeling was but momentary, however, for I directly came to my senses and saw that I had got to engage in the hard reality of working for my living, instead of whiling away my days in a dream of love and pleasure.

"Come, my friend," said Mr. Wilton, "I must beg the favor of leaning on your arm again; I have been listening to Woollish's remarks so long that my legs really feel unsteady. It is rather late, too, and those confounded printers will be waiting for copy. We must hurry."

Whether it were owing to the remarks of Mr. Woollish, or to the drop or two of Glenlivet, which Mr. Wilton had indulged in for the last time, it is not necessary for me to say; but I found

that he leaned more heavily than usual on my arm, and was more than ever troubled by his gouty toe. Mr. Woolly himself had withdrawn in his quiet manner and left us alone, but he had generously left his book behind him, with his autograph on the fly leaf addressed to me, with a request that I would review it.

"Woollish is an excellent fellow, in his way," said Mr. Wilton, as we walked towards his office, "an exceedingly gentlemanly fellow, in fact; and the only literary man I have any intimacy with. Literary men are such queer kind of persons, they have so many odd whims and require so much deference that I cannot put up with their nonsense; but Woollish is a gentlemanly quiet fellow, and an admirer of my political writings, I may say without vanity, and I like him much. Your literary men have no appreciation of that sort of thing, and I don't know one of the whole brood that has ever had the discrimination to discern the kind of merit which my leaders possess besides Woollish. I like to do him a favor because he is a capital good fellow, a most capital good fellow! and as he has addressed a few sonnets to me, I would like to give him a good review of his book in my paper. He has taken a great liking to you and I think it would be a good subject for your first attempt. You shall review him in your fresh and original style."

I was not very well pleased to have such a duty assigned me, and pleaded my inability to do justice to Mr. Woollish's writings from not having studied them sufficiently. But Mr. Wilton would listen to no excuse, and thinking that he might possibly have a different opinion on the subject, when he awoke in the morning, if he did not forget it altogether, I made no further objection, and we arrived at his room in a few moments, where we found a boy waiting for copy.

"Wait but a minute, my lad," said Mr. Wilton, as he seated himself at his desk, "and you shall have my leader;" and, seizing his pen, he immediately began to write with astonishing rapidity, on little slips of paper, which he threw towards the boy as fast as he filled them. I was amused to see him write with

such facility, and, when the boy had left, expressed my astonishment, and asked him if he had been actually writing a leader for his paper, and what the subject of his remarks was.

"The art of thinking is about as mechanical," said Mr. Wilton, "as that of writing; and once you acquire the habit of arranging your thoughts in a manner fit to be presented to the public it matters not whether you communicate them by speech or writing. The art of communicating your thoughts or your information to another, is one which may be easily learned, but the faculty of thinking correctly is innate; now I think that you possess the power of thought, and of course the art of communicating what you think will be readily acquired; it will take some time for you to learn the still greater art of hiding such thoughts as may not be profitable to communicate to other people, for the object of writing for the public is to please them, that they may buy your paper, and not to instruct them, or benefit them, contrary to their wishes."

"I am afraid, then," I replied, "that I shall not succeed as well as your assistant, for I am determined not to conceal my opinions. I must be true to myself, for I am bound for the rest of my life never to be guilty of dissimulation or deceit; and as I have already found by my past experience that the habit of secreting my thoughts leads to falsehood, let what harm come from speaking plainly that may, it cannot be so injurious as that which would result from dissimulation."

"O, of course not," said Mr. Wilton. "I am quite charmed with your sincerity. The idea of speaking what you think, however, on all occasions, is so decidedly novel, that I am not sure but that it would take in a newspaper. In fact I am quite delighted at the idea, and I have a good mind to try the experiment. But, pray, Mr. Pepper, do you really intend to practice that kind of sincerity at all times, and towards everybody?"

"Of course, I do," I replied; "is falsehood ever pardonable?"

"Well, upon my soul, that is taking rather exalted ground, my young friend, and I cannot say but that you are right. But

pray, would you express yourself with the same degree of openness and unreserve to the public that you do to me; would you call a knave a knave, in so many words, without any respect to position in society?"

"Indeed, I would," I replied. "Why should I respect knavery in one position more than in another? Does God, does the Law, make any distinction?"

"Yes, but how do you think that the thing would work? do you think it would pay? do you think that the public mind is prepared for such a radical change? Is it not in advance of the age, and would we not subject ourselves to the charge of radicalism or fanaticism?"

"Very likely," said I, "but what then? do you think there are not more honest men than rogues in the world, and are you afraid of being too honest, too truthful, too magnanimous, too just, too pure, too candid, too virtuous?"

"I cannot say that I ever have feared anything of the kind yet," said Mr. Wilton, as he rubbed his glasses and put them on again and looked me very earnestly in the face: "but to confess the truth to you, my young friend, I have been guilty of the most dreadful dissimulation and deceit; that is, if your theory of truth be the correct one. But how can it be helped? The people will not bear the truth; they would stop their subscriptions, if I should venture upon such an experiment, and I should starve."

"Well, I am not experienced in your business, but if that be the case, then you are bound to abandon it. I would not continue in any employment which required so tremendous a sacrifice; it would be better at once to go upon the highway, and commence robbing passengers of their purses."

"O, no, no, no, my friend, there you are wrong," said Mr. Wilton; "that would be a double crime—it would be breaking the laws of both God and man; and it would subject you to disgrace and imprisonment. It is surely better to commit a legal sin than an illegal one."

I was forced to acknowledge that he was right. "But I will not believe in the necessity for falsehood," I continued; "all the evil that has befallen me has had its origin in untruth, while no harm has ever come to me from practicing the most transparent sincerity in my conduct."

"There is so much plausibility in your theory that I have half a mind to try it," said Mr. Wilton. "I am almost inclined to believe it will pay. It will be novel, at least; and novelty, you know, is the life and soul of a newspaper. I would like very much to have my brother Bob's opinion about it, however, before I begin, for he knows the world, and I have generally found his judgment in such matters to be better than my own."

"He, of all men, in the world," said I, "should be in favor of candor and honesty; after having been so deceived by that French Countess."

"That is true, a very good argument, I must confess," said Mr. Wilton, "if brother Bob should be of your mind and recommend such a course, I would venture upon it at once. But it would make a great excitement in Wall street; and among the Booksellers. Good Heavens! what a regiment of old common places would have to go immediately into a state of retracy."

"Where they should go, of course," said I; "and their places should be supplied by new thoughts, new expressions, new feelings and new truths."

"There you are wrong, again," said Mr. Wilton, "you must not delude yourself with the idea of propagating new truths in a newspaper; it is not the proper vehicle for novelties of thought, but for novelties of fact. What I have just been writing now I have had in my thoughts all day; part of it I found in an old newspaper, and part of it I gathered from other sources; the subject is not an important one, but what I have written upon it will be new to my readers in arrangement, but old and familiar enough to be easily recognized and understood; if it were new or profound it would require time, study and thought to comprehend it, and therefore it would not be read at all. What I

mean by novelties, is a new mode of expression which your principles if adopted in the conduct of a newspaper would call into use.

"Thus, instead of saying, in regard to a new book, that it was one of the most remarkable productions of the age, you would simply say that from reading the title page, and feeling of the covers, you had not been able to form any opinions of its merits; or, instead of penning a few lines to announce the death of some person, about whom you cared nothing, that it was with the most profound feelings of regret that you announced the departure from this scene of action of so-and-so, you would merely put the man's death in your obituary, and say that you cared nothing about it, if you said anything at all. All such expressions as "it is with the greatest pleasure that we hear so-and-so," or "we are extremely mortified at this occurrence," or "we are deeply grieved at that," which are generally written with the same pen, and with the same feeling of perfect indifference, would all have to be laid aside; and as nothing but the simple truth would ever be stated, each paper, instead of being a mere modification of another, would be entirely original, a thing by itself, and not an unsubstantial shadow of something else. Then what would become of all the patriotism, all the chivalry, all the eloquence, all the thrilling excitement, all the dreadful accidents, all the brilliant audiences, all the incomparable singers, all the overflowing houses, all the most remarkable men of the age, the splendid appearances, the perfectly wonderful works of art, the gentlemanly addresses, the ravishing music which put an audience to sleep, the thrilling romance which nobody can read, the ardent patriots who sell themselves for an office, the upright lawyers, who take fees from rogues. How do you think, Mr. Pepper, a newspaper would look without any of these things?"

"Remarkably well," said I, "if they could not be honestly put into it. The truth is, now, that hyperbole has exhausted itself; the most extravagant praises sound tame and spiritless, and

you will find that a return to, or rather the adoption of a simple and truthful policy in the management of your paper, for I cannot find that anybody has ever tried such an experiment, will be more startling and popular than any other course that you could pursue. At all events, I will not consent to follow any other; and if you are not willing to employ me on such terms I will seek some other business where starvation is not the penalty for speaking the truth."

"But the difficulty will be, my young friend," said Mr. Wilton, "to find any such employment, for I will confess to you that I know of none that you would be likely to succeed in; the world is so given to deceit; mankind have been so long accustomed to being cheated that when one attempts to be more honest than his neighbors, he is sure of being cried down as a humbug or a fanatic. If the press should once get to accusing me of nursing an ism I should be ruined. I couldn't make way against it."

"What is that ism," said I, "that you fear so much, is it plagiarism, for that is one of the worst that can be laid to the door of a newspaper, I think."

"O! no, nothing of that sort," said he, "that is a kind of an ism that happens to be popular; but they accuse an editor of harboring an ism when they want to make an indefinite charge against him which will cause the public to avoid his paper; it has no particular meaning and therefore it is the more terrible, as an object seen in a fog always appears more formidable than in a clear atmosphere. But I will confess to you that I am struck by your proposition, and I think I will try it; I will have a talk with my brother Bob, who has an interest in the paper, and ought to be consulted, and then I will see what our Domine, Dr. Dollarsworth, thinks of it. And in the meantime you shall write what you please, and we will see what effect it will have upon the public; I rather think, that I shall come into the measure in the end. There now, is a heap of papers, just look them over and see if you cannot find some subject to write about. Be just as

candid, and as truthful as you please; be pointed, fresh and slashing, and we will see how it effects the stomachs of the public. But, by-the-way, speaking about stomachs, it has given me a kind of cholic; if it should strike to a vital part the consequences might be fatal. I think, Mr. Pepper, that just for this occasion, as I find there is a drop of that Glenlivat remaining that I will mix a tumbler of punch for you and me and then I will give it up for ever. One more taste; will do no particular harm, of course, and I think that after so much earnest talk it will benefit my system. To-morrow we will begin the world anew and give up the Glenlivat and take to telling the truth. It will create a tremendous excitement in Wall street, though; you may depend upon it."

"Is truth, then, so rare a thing in Wall street," said I, "that it will create more astonishment there than in any other place?"

"I believe it will, upon my soul," said he, "and the fact is that I fear its effects there the most, because I have there the greatest number of subscribers. But my brother Bob will be able to tell me all about it. Let us for the present drink up the last of the Glenlivat. *In vino veritas*, you know, is an old maxim, so you will not object to just the merest drop of Glenlivat, as it is for the last time."

"It there had been any truth in the maxim —"

"Ha, ha, ha! very good. I know what you were going to say. I should have been one of the most truthful of men. Well, perhaps I am; at least, Mr. Pepper, no man ever yet had the assurance to doubt my word."

Mr. Wilton having mixed his punch to his taste and drained the last drop of Glenlivat from the bottle, leaned his head back in his easy chair and in a very few moments began to snore.

I had taken but a sip of the liquor, for although it had an extremely pleasant flavor I had a great dread of becoming a tippler from seeing the effect of drinking upon some of the people

with whom I had come in contact. It was extremely flattering to my pride to be taken into the confidence of so distinguished a person as Mr. Wilton, and to feel that he deferred to my opinions: and as the post of a public writer was one that seemed to be of great dignity in the eyes of the public, I was most desirous of pleasing Mr. Wilton that he might keep me as his assistant, but I was resolved not to yield a hair's breadth of my determination to be perfectly honest and candid in anything that I might write for his paper.

It so happened that nothing occurred on the first day of my engagement with Mr. Wilton calculated to test the effect of telling the truth to the public. I wrote a few paragraphs of no great consequence, and I will confess that I experienced a degree of pride on seeing my writing in print the next morning, that I had never before felt on any occasion. It was a delightful thought to me to reflect that thousands of intelligent readers were actually receiving impressions from me, and that among them were probably those whom I loved and held in the highest esteem. Knowing the exact hour at which the morning paper was usually received and read in the family of old Gil, and that Pauline generally was the first to glance over it, reading, as young ladies are wont to do, the marriages first, and then the dreadful accidents of the day: I felt a thrill of strange pleasure at the thought that she might be then reading my chance reflections, and I could not help flattering myself that she would discover by some sympathetic touch of feeling that I had written them. Then again, I knew that Mr. Bassett would be looking over the paper to discover what I had written, and this too gave me a new sensation of delight, but quite different from that which I felt in regard to Pauline. This consciousness of communicating with, or rather speaking to thousands of minds at the same time, and daily influencing the thoughts of people whom I should never see, gave me an exalted opinion of the importance of the position of a Journalist, and caused me to feel more satisfied with myself than I ever had before been. A new sphere of life was opened to me,

and I was now more than ever impressed with the necessity of cultivating a frank and truthful disposition. If the mere tradesman, or preacher, or mechanic, or farmer, whose influence is confined to a small circle, is bound to be truthful and sincere in his dealings with other people, how much more imperative is the duty of truthfulness in the Journalist, whose influence is almost unlimited. I do not include the legal advocate, or lawyer, in the category of those who are bound to be truthful, because it is his professed business to make the wrong appear right, the right wrong, to prevaricate, to suppress facts, to conceal frauds, to defend evil, to give counsel to law-breakers, to screen the guilty, to oppress the innocent, to mystify, quibble, and countenance subterfuges. Lawyers being allowed to take bribes from rogues, and suffered to live by screening the guilty from punishment, cannot, of course, be ranked with men who are under a moral as well as legal obligation to do right. It is their vocation to disguise the truth; they are a class by themselves to whom the law grants the privilege of misrepresentation, and perhaps it is one of the most melancholy evidences of the proneness of men to do wrong that the profession of the law is more crowded than any other.

Mr. Wilton having expressed himself entirely satisfied with what I had written, I entered at once upon my duties with ardor, and with my mind filled with sublime thoughts of reforming the world and remodelling society. Nothing seemed to be more easy than to produce a great moral revolution by the means of the pen. As I had often been forcibly impressed by the inconsistencies between the professions and actions of church members, and other pious persons, I determined to make this subject the ground work of my first leader. It had not then occurred to me that almost everybody was not only capable of scrutinizing his neighbor's conduct and indicating his inconsistencies and failings, but that everybody did so, and that such a feat would not be regarded as very novel or startling in me; neither had it then occurred to me that one of the surest and most efficient methods of reforming the world is first to reform yourself. Charity generally begins

at home, as she should, but the charity of reformers generally begins abroad.

Considering myself in a situation which I should not very soon change, I furnished a room adjoining the one occupied by Mr. Wilton, and bargained with Sykes for my board. I made no particular agreement with Mr. Wilton about wages, feeling quite sure that he would give me all the recompence that I might be entitled to; I had but very little money, however, and was obliged to get credit for the furniture of my room, which I experienced no difficulty in doing.

After the appearance of the first paper on which I had employed my talents, I was introduced to brother Bob, by Mr. Wilton. Brother Bob was a very different looking person from what I had expected to see; instead of being a wild, rattle-headed fellow, he was an exceedingly grave-looking gentleman, not far from fifty years old. His hair was nearly white, he dressed very much like a clergyman, wore a gold-headed cane, and spoke in a deliberate, thoughtful manner.

"Brother Bob," said Mr. Wilton, pointing towards me as I sat at my desk, "this is my new assistant, Mr. Tom Pepper."

I rose and bowed to him.

"Keep your seat, sir," said brother Bob; "I am glad to see you, and hope you will be able to agree with my brother."

"O, there's no danger of our disagreeing, brother Bob," said Mr. Wilton; "Mr. Pepper and I understand each other pretty well, although our acquaintance has been but a short one. But, by the way, that reminds me. I want to ask your opinion, brother Bob, on a very delicate question."

Brother Bob, on hearing this, put his cane upon the mantel-piece, and, taking off his hat, sat down and hemmed, as though he was prepared to hear almost anything, and to give his opinion without hesitation.

"Mr. Pepper, here," continued Mr. Wilton, "has made a rather embarrassing proposition to me in regard to the paper; he professes to have a very nice sense of his obligations to speak the

truth on all occasions, and thinks it would be a good feature to adopt into the paper. What do you think of it, brother Bob, would it be safe? Do you think it will pay?"

"I think it a very excellent plan," replied brother Bob; "I do not see what objections there can be to such a course; provided of course that nothing is said against religion."

"I am glad to hear you say so," said Mr. Wilton, "for it is just my way of thinking: I like the idea, and I think the novelty of the thing will make considerable stir in Wall street. We may get some subscribers by it, and we shall be quite sure of not losing any, for who will have the courage to confess himself an enemy to truth? By the way, brother Bob, give me a cigar. What are these, Principles?"

"I believe so," said brother Bob; "you know that I don't smoke, myself; but I generally put a handfull in my hat at the meetings of the board, for I like to have my share of plunder."

"Brother Bob is an Alderman, you must know, Mr. Pepper; and he finds me in cigars at the public expense," said Mr. Wilton; "and capital good cigars they are, too. Try one."

"Although you continue to smoke, I hope you have given up drinking Glenlivet," said brother Bob, gravely.

"O, long since," said Mr. Wilton. "I may sometimes take a drop, as a medicine; but I mean to give it up as a drink altogether. We are going on a new plan in the paper, and this will be a good time to make a permanent change of habits."

Brother Bob commended this resolution, and paying me a handsome compliment on my integrity, and wishing me success in my new employment, he withdrew.

"I knew that he would approve of your plan," said Mr. Wilton, "because he has lately become pious, and is, of course, very favorable to any scheme for promoting the cause of truth."

I considered myself very fortunate in having fallen into the hands of such excellent people, who so heartily entered into my scheme; and I began my first leader on the inconsistencies of the professedly pious, with the most high toned and exalted feel-

ings, and soon completed an article I supposed would be the means of placing me at the head of journalists, and gain me the confidence and regard of the editor and brother Bob, both of whom I was very desirous to please. Mr. Wilton happened to be out of his room when my leader was finished; I could not submit it to him for his examination, and the printer's boy having called for copy, I gave it to him, and it was set up and printed off. The next morning I read my leader with great satisfaction, and felt myself of immense consequence, when I heard one gentleman observe to another, in the bar-room at Sykes. "There's a good deal of truth in that article about religion, in the ——— this morning; it will touch somebody on a sore spot."

Going back to the room of Mr. Wilton, to enjoy my triumph, and receive his congratulations, I found the truth-loving editor walking the floor in a state of great excitement, with the paper in his hand.

"Pepper, you have ruined me," he exclaimed, as I entered. "Brother Bob says he would not have had that article to appear for ten thousand dollars. We shall lose half our subscribers."

"Does it contain anything that is not strictly true," said I.

"Perhaps not," replied Mr. Wilton, "but I did not suppose that you meant to put such kind of truths into the paper."

As we were talking, a boy came in and delivered a note to Mr. Wilton.

"There, there!" he exclaimed as he read the note; "It is just what I expected. Here is a note from old Gilson, ordering his paper to be stopped. Good heavens! Pepper, I am a ruined man; that leader of yours will lose us our best subscribers."

I could easily understand why old Gil had stopped his paper, for I had, quite unconsciously, sketched some of his religious peculiarities in my leader, and I was not a little mortified to find that I should no longer have Pauline for one of my readers.

"Perhaps there are not many more like old Gil," said I; "the truth may not be quite so unpalatable to all; besides, a truth which displeases one will be sure to please a good many."

"But the worst of it is," said Mr. Wilton, "brother Bob will have it that you meant him; and he will not consent to your writing another line for the paper. He says you are a dangerous character, and insists on my discharging you immediately. I must put in an apology to-morrow morning for your plain speaking, or we shall not have a subscriber left on our books."

The office boy here made his appearance, and handed another note to Mr. Wilton, who read it with a falling countenance and then handed it to me, saying: "there's another stoppage, from one of the most high minded and honorable men in Wall street." On reading the note I could not help smiling when I discovered that it was written by my old friend Barton, the Bank-president, whose religious feelings had been shocked by my leader. He, too, ordered his paper to be stopped, and even returned the one containing the obnoxious leader.

"I see now," said I, "what is understood by the influence of the press; it means the influence of the subscribers to a paper. Is not that it?"

"Why I am not sure but that it is, Pepper, after all," replied Mr. Wilton.

"I am quite sure it is," said I; "the experience of this morning has dissipated a very fine dream in which I have been indulging. I see that I cannot be a newspaper editor if I would preserve my individual integrity."

"Well, perhaps you are right. But the truth is, my dear fellow, I fear that you are a little too impracticable for this world. You may depend upon it that you must give up your high-toned abstractions and come down to the level of common people if you expect to have common fare in this world. No individual has any right to set himself up as a standard for all mankind. There's my brother Bob, now, one of the most strictly conscientious and pious men in Wall street; he was perfectly shocked at your radical notions."

"But he said that he was delighted with my truthfulness," I

remarked, "and advised you to adopt my suggestions as to the conduct of your paper."

"Of course he did; but he did not understand that we intended to meddle with religion and offend the prejudices of our subscribers," said Mr. Wilton; "I am sorry to part with you, but really I am not yet prepared to starve, and I am very sure that you would soon reduce me to that condition. I couldn't afford to dine at Sykes's if we published a leader every day like that of yours this morning. Independence is a very good thing, and I must say that I like it very well in the abstract; but when it comes to depriving a man of his dinner, it is not one of those virtues that I feel myself under any moral necessity of cultivating."

"Well, sir," said I, rising to go, and feeling a growing contempt for Mr. Wilton in spite of his amiabilities, and his flattering partiality for me, "my determination has been taken and I will not swerve from it. I will be true to my own convictions of duty, let what will come of it. Good heavens! sir, I could starve with pleasure, if it were necessary, to preserve my integrity of opinion. I am young and vigorous, I have good health, my wants are few, there are none dependent upon me for support, to make me waver in my resolutions; and henceforth, with God's blessing, which I hope for, I will live a true man."

Remembering my promise to Mr. Bassett, as soon as I quitted the editorial office of Mr. Wilton, which I must confess I left with a good deal of reluctance, for there was so much true manliness in his character that I felt a very strong attachment to him, I hurried to the store of my old friend and mentor, to tell him that I was once more afloat in the world, and without any means for earning my subsistence.

"Never mind, Tom," said Mr. Bassett, laughing as he spoke "perhaps you will at last hit upon some business which will admit of your telling the truth, without subjecting you to ruin."

"I hope so," said I, "but I almost despair of it. If so good-hearted and intelligent a person as Mr. Wilton finds it dangerous

to be truthful, I fear that I shall hardly fall in with any body willing to give me employment and allow me to speak my mind. But I will try to find somebody."

"Persevere, and you will succeed," said Mr. Bassett. "Mr. Wilton is a very good and a very intelligent man, as you say; but you must remember that it is his business to echo the falsehoods of the world, not to proclaim new truths to it; and you must not hastily conclude that all men are given to glozing over the truth, because you happen to fall into the hands of one who earns his daily bread by doing so."

"I am willing to be encouraged by what you say," I replied. "I shall not give up my trust in the power of truth, for so slight a reason; and now I must go out again into the streets and alleys and seek for employment, before night, for I do not yet know where my home will be to-morrow."

"That's bravely said, my boy," said Mr. Bassett; "and how much money have you remaining in your pocket of what I gave you last, for when a man goes on such a hazardous expedition as you are bent upon, he wants something besides his resolution to sustain him?"

"I have but three pistareens left," said I, exposing the contents of my pockets, "and of them I have found that one is a counterfeit."

"That's but a small capital to begin with," said he, "for one who goes in search of a situation where he can be allowed the privilege of speaking the truth. Take these bills, my boy, and if they should be exhausted before you find yourself a situation to your mind, come to me again and I will give you more."

The bills that he offered me were three bank bills of the denomination of ten dollars each, but I refused to receive them, upon which he seemed annoyed and pressed them upon me.

"Take them, Tom," said he, "you do not know what difficulties may befall you from not having money in your pocket. I shall feel uneasy respecting you, if you do not. You have no right to refuse me."

But I had become infatuated with my resolution to depend upon my own exertions for my support, and was determined to test the experiment to the full, of dealing with all men with perfect sincerity and truthfulness. I had no desire of being a martyr, but I felt something of that pride of opinion which has, probably, influenced the majority of those who have courted martyrdom; and feeling myself quite sufficient for myself, I was too proud to accept assistance.

"You have often," said I, "strove to impress upon my mind the importance of candor and open-heartedness, and I have suffered too severely by neglecting the lessons that you taught me, ever again to transgress. I have lost my father by my falsehoods, and it will be but a slight atonement to devote the remainder of my life to the practice of entire truthfulness."

"But, my son," he said, endeavouring to force the bills into my pocket, "that need not prevent your receiving aid from me; there is no violation of truth in receiving money from one who loves you. Take it, my boy, lest, not having it, you be led to commit the very error that you hope to guard against."

"No, sir," said I proudly, "it would be but a small merit in me to preserve myself pure if I were not subject to temptations. I shall trust to my principles, and if the world really be so bad that an honest man cannot earn his living in it, then the sooner I get out of it the better."

"Be careful, Tom," said he, looking me seriously in the face, "that you do not in a moment of disappointment or anger, forget your promise to me not to change your condition without informing me of your intentions."

"I shall not forget it," said I.

"Remember, too," he said, again looking me seriously in the face, "that no one has a right to selfishly regard his own feelings alone; if there are others whose happiness depends upon your conduct, you must consult their feelings as well as your own."

"I shall not forget," I replied; "but those who feel the most for me will be best pleased when I do that which promotes my

own happiness; so, in taking care of myself, I should confer the most happiness on those who love me, if there be any such."

"If there be any such!" said Mr. Bassett, looking reproachfully at me; "do you not know that there are such?"

"I hope there are," said I.

"You may be sure there are," said he.

As I was bent on looking for employment, and anticipated with great delight the pleasure of eating a meal which was paid for with my own earnings, I again shook hands with Mr. Bassett, and left his store, with no settled purpose for the future, excepting my determination to be honest, let it cost what it might, and quite uncertain whither to turn. Remembering that I had left my penknife at Mr. Wilton's office, I called there for it, and found a letter lying for me on his desk, directed in a hand which was new to me, and opening I was surprised to discover that it was written by a person of whom I had never heard before. The note was as follows:

"My very dear Mr. Pepper, come and dine with me to-day, at 4 o'clock. I want to talk over a little business affair with you.

Yours truly, and most friendly,

ARTHUR SLOPPERTON.

P. S.—Strictly confidential."

—— Hotel.

I was a good deal puzzled by this extremely odd note, which was written so very badly that I could with difficulty make it out. Mr. Wilton was not in his office, and I could not learn where it came from, nor anything respecting Mr. Sloperton. A suspicion crossed my mind at first that it might be some deeply laid plot of those shallow gentlemen, Messieurs Riquets and Pilfor, to entrap me into some kind of difficulty, for I had heard they had both sworn to be revenged upon me for exposing them at Sykes'. But I was not in the least afraid of them, and as Mr. Sloperton had invited me to one of the best hotels in the city, I had little cause to fear any danger in so respectable a place; so I determined to go and see who Mr. Sloperton was,

as I should save the cost of my dinner by accepting his invitation. But what business could a gentleman have with me to whom I was an entire stranger? This question kept popping into my thoughts all day, so that I could hardly divert my mind to any other subject. I busied myself until near the appointed time for meeting Mr. Sloperton, in seeking for employment, but without success, and as the clock struck four, I entered the bar-room of the —— Hotel, and inquired for my new acquaintance; the waiter showed me into a private parlor, which was furnished in a very sumptuous manner. I did not perceive as I entered that there was any person in it, but as I advanced to the centre of the room, a gentleman rose from the crimson velvet sofa on which he was lying, and seizing me by the hand, said:

"Well, how are you? how are you? Punctual to the hour. I like that. Come, sit down, I am devilish glad to see you. How are you? It is Mr. Pepper, isn't it?"

All this was said with so much heartiness and apparent good feeling, that I was at once most favorably impressed with my new friend; but I was more than ever astonished to be received in such a manner by a total stranger.

"Are you Mr. Sloperton?" said I.

"O! of course I am. Didn't you expect to see me here. I should be devilish sorry to find any body else taking possession of my apartments. Come, Antoinette, spread the table; what are you looking at? let us have dinner immediately."

This was said to the waiter, who immediately disappeared and directly after began to spread the table and bring in the dinner.

"Well. And how have you been? I am devilish glad to see you," again said Mr. Sloperton. "How are you? I like you. There is a deep vein in you, a—a—a man-of-the-worldish air I like. I am always open, candid and sincere with people I take a liking to. I like your general style and making up; there's such a devilish gentlemanly-mannered way about you."

Mr. Sloperton gave me no opportunity to reply to him or demand any explanation, but kept running on with great volubility,

repeating how well he liked me, and reminding me of the good points in my character which had captivated his fancy. But if I had no opportunity to ask an explanation of his conduct, and of his motives in sending for me, I had sufficient time to scan his person and form an estimate of his character. He was a dark-haired gentleman of the middle height, and a rather slender person, dressed in the extreme of the fashion, and with great niceness and precision. His clothes rather manifested a full pocket than good taste; they were rich and fashionable, and he wore considerable diamond jewelry, a very showy gold watch chain, and a most obtrusive seal ring on his fore finger; but the colors of his clothes were badly chosen, and nothing but his extreme cleanliness and the richness of his apparel saved him from appearing vulgar and common. He stooped in his gait and his eyes were dark and heavy. In spite of his vivacity, he was dull and spiritless in his manner, and he had the appearance of being worn out. His complexion was very pale and when he stopped speaking, his features were dull and the expression of countenance was that of weariness and ennui. His room was furnished with upholstery of the most sumptuous description, but, like his dress, it indicated a distressing want of taste. The curtains, the sofas, the lounges, the chairs, and the carpet, were of all ill-assorted colors, and composed of such heavy and rich materials that they conveyed a sensation of oppressiveness. Although there were two large mirrors on the walls in heavy gilt frames, there was a full length psyche glass in a richly carved frame standing in a corner of the room. The pictures which hung upon the walls were bad copies from some of the voluptuous female heads of Titian and Rubens; and there was a portfolio of gaudily colored French prints on the centre table; there was a small book-case in the room which contained a few books in rich bindings with gilded backs; they were principally French authors, and instead of *Le Diable Amoureux*, and the novels of Paul De Kock, De Balzar, and books of a similar class which I expected to see, they proved to be chiefly works

on political economy and various other subjects of a kindred nature.

The dinner having been brought in and placed upon the table while he was telling me how he liked me, and how devilish glad he was to see me, and asking me how I was, and how I had been, before I had an opportunity of asking how he knew anything at all about me, and on what occasion he had ever seen me, he asked me to be seated at table.

I am not ashamed to confess to the weakness of liking a good dinner; like charity, it covers a multitude of sins; and, let my mysterious friend's taste in dress and furniture have been what it might, I am bound to do him the justice to say that his taste in ordering a dinner was beyond reproach. I never sat down to a more beautiful *tableau* than that which his centre table presented. It was a delicious picture of still life, in which there were no incongruities to offend the eye, or tricks to deceive the judgment; the whole affair showed consummate art, and, as they say in the newspapers, reflected the highest credit upon the accomplished *artistes* under whose superintendence it was arranged. But my admiring friend rather unsettled my opinion of his judgment on such affairs by beginning to apologise for not having something more suitable for me.

The remarks of Mr. Sloperton were so direct and complimentary that they neither gave me a better opinion of myself than I had before entertained, nor a very exalted one of himself. It was very easy to perceive that Mr. Sloperton "had an axe to grind," and that he required my aid in turning the grind-stone, but how or in what manner I could be useful to such a person I could not conceive, and I was extremely curious to find out how he became acquainted with me. What puzzled me most of all was his continually complimenting me upon being "such a devilish gentlemanly-mannered man," for I had never taken any pains to cultivate those peculiar graces of manner which are supposed to belong exclusively to the class of persons called gentle-

men. In fact I was sensible that a lack of those graces was more likely to be remarked in me than their presence. But I discovered afterwards that Mr. Sloperton was only endeavoring to conciliate me by bestowing upon me the kind of praise which would have been most agreeable to himself. But he got no return for his compliments, for I soon discovered that he was very far from being gentlemanly-mannered, and that he was quite aware of his deficiencies in this particular. Mr. Sloperton made the very common mistake of thinking that everything could be procured for money, but was woefully disappointed when he attempted to purchase that which he most needed, which was self-respect; as this was something that no money could procure him, and he found that upholstery, jewelry and fine clothes, could no more gain him the admiration of the world than they could do the same for the shop-keepers of whom he had purchased them, he had conceived a new plan for gaining the esteem which all his efforts had hitherto failed to secure.

Poor Sloperton! With a handsome fortune, a well-made person, and a tolerably good college education, he had not learned the art of enjoying life. In spite of all the trappings with which he had surrounded himself, and all the luxurious appliances at his command, he was still wretchedly unhappy because he could not get rid of the conviction that he was nobody. He would have been perfectly willing to exchange all his wealth for the honest feeling of self-sufficiency which many a hod-carrier possessed. It was some time before he confessed to me his object in inviting me to dine with him; but I discovered his motive long before he acknowledged it. When we first sat down to dinner something like the following conversation passed between us:

"I am rather *blase* you see. I dare say some people think me a mere trifler; quite a man of the world, and nothing more. But they'll find out all about me one of these days. Don't you think they will, ha?"

"Very likely, people generally get to be pretty well known to those who come in contact with them."

"Faith that's a devilish shrewd remark of yours, Pepper, devilish shrewd. By the way, what an insight you have into character."

"The fricandeau is capital," said I.

"O! hang the fricandeau. Come, now, that's one of your deep manœuvres. What's the meaning of it?"

"I meant nothing more than I said," I replied.

"Ha! ha! ha! Very well, indeed! Bravo! Let me give you just another drop of this wine. It's Chateau Margaux, or some such devilish stuff, that I got from my friend Lynch. By the way, I'll introduce you to him. Fine fellow—knows every body in Europe—George the Fourth, and every body of that sort. I'll give you a letter to the king when you go to Europe, our minister to the Court of St. James, *attache*, lots of duchesses, opera girls, and all such trifles. By the way, you'll appear devilish well in Europe with that piquant, free, candid, gentlemanly manner of yours. Antoine, bring on your game, or some such nonsense of that sort, partridges, woodcock, canvas backs, or something of that sort; any trifle; I don't care what. You like game?"

"Particularly well," said I, "and all the better for not having eaten any this season. Moreover, if you had not invited me to dine with you I should probably have been forced to stay my stomach with dry rusk in a baker's shop."

"What a confession! What a devilish piquant way you have of telling the truth. It's just what I like. There's a style about what you say, a sprightly, sincere, candid air about you that's devilish fresh and delightful. What a happy fellow you must be. Now you think me an aristocrat, and all that sort of thing; but the fact is, Pepper, I am heart and soul with the masses, like yourself. What do you think I am going to do now?"

"Apprentice yourself to a butcher, perhaps," said I.

"Devilish good; ha! ha! ha! Not quite so bad as that, but almost, I am going to Congress. What do you think of it?"

"I think you will be going a long while before you get there," said I, upon which his countenance looked more blank than ever.

"You do? But wait and see; I have laid my plans devilish deep; nothing more easy than to get into Congress; don't you see what blockheads get there every day."

"Very true; but you are not the kind of blockhead to accomplish such a feat, I think."

"You think so? Ha! ha! ha! I have already bought up three editors ——"

"Who will, of course, be bought up by somebody else to-morrow. Editors who can be bought are not worth buying."

"Ah, my dear Pepper, I see you are quite a novice. Immense Power of the Press, lever of public opinion, they can do anything; I have got them bound hand and foot. I am quite a man of the world, you see; make it for a man's interest and he will do anything. Money is the secret. No mistake about that. See how I will have all the readers on my side. I'll identify myself with them; make a democrat of myself, make speeches in Tammany Hall, shake hands with everybody, hale fellow well met every where. Don't you see!"

"And pray what is your motive for wanting to go to Congress? It is an odd fancy."

"To serve my country. To be useful to mankind. You don't think I care anything about patronage, or political distinction; or that I would give the toss of a penny to see myself called the Honorable so-and-so; no, no; nothing of that sort. I am above all that sort of thing. All I want is an opportunity to do good; to be serviceable to my country; and be looked up to as a man of—that is, a man who does good to mankind, makes laws and all that."

"It's a very easy thing to do good without going to Congress," said I; "and, in fact, there is so very little good done there that it strikes me the safer way would be to keep out of Congress if it's your aim to do good."

"Ha! ha! what a devilish gentlemanly way you have of saying sarcastic things. If I had your talents, now, I might be justified in going to Congress to display them. But, come, let's put your doctrine home to you. Some Heidsick? It's good, is it?"

"Superb."

"Yes, I believe it is fair; so, so; but I care nothing about such trifles; however, my aim is to mingle among honorable men."

"Men called Honorable," said I.

"Well, that's good again. Devilish sarcastic, though; now, my good fellow, I shall begin to think, by and by, that you have been soured by the world."

"Soured by the world! No, the world has no power to sour me. Because I speak the truth you think it is because I am soured in my feelings; but no, it is owing to my excessive good nature that I speak so plainly. If I were sour, I would lie and flatter, and laugh in my sleeve at the credulity of the world as knaves and humbugs. But, I love the world too well to deceive it by any false devices. Do you think you could be guilty of double dealing towards anybody whom you loved?"

"There is a devilish sight of truth in what you say, I must confess," said Mr. Sloperton, trying to look solemn and important; "but, my dear fellow, all your words are like acidulated drops, so made up of sugar and lemon that it is difficult to tell whether they are sweet or sour. Ha! ha! ha! I have you there, ha?" And he shut one eye and looked at me knowingly with the other, as though he were trying to impress me with the force of his brilliant sally.

"Very good," said I.

"Well, that's encouraging. Come now, my dear fellow, let us proceed to business."

I pricked up my ears at the mention of business, for I had been so much amused with the oddities of my entertainer that I had forgotten that I was ignorant of his object in sending for me. "Very good," said I; "if you have any business matters to arrange with me I shall be most happy to know it, for business is

precisely the thing that I am in pursuit of. But pray what business can you have with a person whom you never saw before, and can know but little about. But perhaps it is something concerning my father," I exclaimed, as the thought suddenly occurred to me; "if so, speak quickly I beg of you."

"No, no, nothing of the kind. The fact is, my fine fellow, that I know you devilish well, better than you think for. How I came by my knowledge of you is no matter, at least, not now. I am quite a man of the world, you see, indifferent to money and such trifles and all that sort of thing; but I want to use you and am willing to pay you devilish well."

"I shall be but too happy to serve you in anything that is honorable," I said, "provided you pay me for it."

"Oh, it's strictly honorable, of course; I am incapable of proposing anything base to you, you know, of course. But, I like your precaution, vastly. It strengthens my good opinion of you, and, in fact, confirms the high idea I had formed of your character for ingenuousness, honesty and all that, you know. You are such a devilishly unique fellow, now, that a man of the world, like myself, cannot be altogether prepared for you. What an excellent talent you have, by the way, for a diplomat. I can get you an appointment, if you wish, to the Court of St. James, St. Cloud, or any other Saint you may like. Faith, you are quite the man of the nineteenth century, piquant, deep, brilliant, comprehensive, and so devilishly refined and finished."

These compliments were poured upon me so thickly and rapidly, that I began to be annoyed by them; so said I—"But the business, let us arrange the business, I am anxious to be employed."

"Oh, ah, to be sure," said he, filling my glass with sherry; "try a glass of this Amontilla do. first; it will soothe your nerves and assist your digestion; then we will have a cup of coffee. Antoine, bring the coffee, a glass of liqueur, noyau, or maraschino, or something in that way; and then a cigar, and then we will go regularly to work. It's only a trifling affair;

you will laugh at me I know. But I shall pay you well. I am a man of the world you know, and understand perfectly well that something cannot be had for nothing; or ought not, at least. I am a philosopher you see, and understand perfectly well the whole routine of trade, although I may seem like a mere superficial sort of a trifler to a chance observer.

"Some people say," continued Mr. Sloperton, growing more and more familiar, "I am a remarkable man, to be sure, and all that; and Lord Brougham, Webster, and Dr. Chalmers, and men of that class, have complimented me on my character."

"Have they, indeed," I exclaimed; "that is remarkable."

"Isn't it?" said he; "but, what do I care for compliments from such humbugs as they are. A compliment from you, now, mixed up with some of those devilish nice acidulated drops that you let fall so gracefully, would be something to a fellow. What I want is the honest truth, and nothing more."

"O, then, they were not sincere in what they said about you?"

"Well, now, I won't say that. Brougham is a good fellow in his way, and so is Webster; I wouldn't like to charge them with duplicity, you know. But, they are men of the world, and they are lawyers too, and lawyers you know get in the habit of lying from taking fees professionally, to suppress the truth. But this brings me to the point at once. The truth is, my dear fellow, I have found out from my friend Barton, my banker, too, by-the-way, all about you."

I blushed at the mention of Mr. Barton's name, I must admit, not from any guilty feeling, but because I suspected that he had told my unaccountable acquaintance the particulars of my intimacy with Miss Gilson. Mr. Sloperton perceived my momentary confusion, and began to laugh in his vapid way.

"Blushing! ha! ha! Well, my good fellow, I like it in you; it's devilish piquant and pleasant."

"And so," said I, "Mr. Barton told you all about me—all that he knew, I suppose—but he don't know much about me; nor nothing that I would not have told you myself."

"O, of course not," said Mr. Slopperton. "Barton is a devilish spirituel, piquant, pleasant fellow; he told me nothing that he should not have told, and if I had not heard from him what a devilish gentlemanly-mannered man you are, I would not have sent for you on this business. Not I. I know too much about the world for that, you will find. Quite too much, altogether."

"Very good," said I, rather impatiently, for I was beginning to grow tired of hearing myself called a devilish piquant, gentlemanly-mannered dear fellow, and of being informed by Mr. Slopperton that he was quite a man of the world—it would be but a sorry compliment to the world, though, to believe Mr. Slopperton what he represented himself; "Very good," said I, "but I am getting weary. Will you be so kind as to inform me of your object in sending for me to dine with you, and let me be off?"

"O! that's exquisite!" exclaimed my entertainer, greatly to my astonishment. "Capital! delicious!" and he rubbed his hands together with great glee, and leaping up from his chair danced round the table and clasped me round the neck with such earnestness as to nearly choke me.

I was by this time nearly convinced that Mr. Slopperton was a lunatic, but his eye was so dull and heavy, and he so easily sank back into his chair and resumed his old manner, that I saw he was not exactly insane of mind.

"You are such an extraordinary person," said he as he resumed his seat, "so devilishly remarkable and piquant, that you must overlook my warmth of manner. What a genius you are. Barton, confound him, did not half prepare me for such a devilish extraordinary fellow. You are worth a mint of money to me. I haven't had such a delicious sensation this month. You are better than a new prima donna. Wine?"

"No, no," I exclaimed, putting up my hand, "I have eaten and drank enough."

"And heard enough, too. Ha?" said Mr. Slopperton, rubbing his hands together. "And so you are beginning to get weary of

me? Well, that's delicious. You see I know how to appreciate you, my dear fellow; your frankness is so devilishly piquant, that I am really enchanted with you. Faith, if you ever get into your baronetcy what a sensation you will make among those devilish *distingue* aristocrats in England. Confound them all, say I! You see my sympathies are all with the masses, and the down-trodden millions, and all that sort of thing, my dear fellow."

"My baronetcy!" I exclaimed; "ah! there's little chance of anything like that for me. I shall be but too happy, if I can but earn my bread and butter honestly, without sighing after a fortune which I have lost by my wicked folly."

"Don't talk about earning your bread and butter, my dear fellow," said he, "while you have that devilish remarkable talent of your's for telling the truth so piquantly; it will be a mine of wealth to you. You will become one of the most *distingue* men in town, and all the women will be running after you to hear you talk. But to business —"

"To business then, let me entreat you. I am impatient to be gone. My time, probably, is worth more to me than yours is to you."

"Not a bit, my good fellow, not a bit. I will pay you well for every moment you spend with me. You shall name your own price. I am not quite a millionaire, to be frank with you, Pepper, but I have got enough for both of us, and while I have a crust of bread you shall never go hungry. Everything I have is at your disposal. My wardrobe, library, cigars, bank-book, all but Sophie, but never mind about her. And now to business. You see, my dear fellow, as I was saying to you just now, my friend Barton, who is also my banker, and one of the most devilishly agreeable men about town, has told me all about you; so that will save you the trouble of making any *expose* of your private history to me."

"I am glad of it," said I, "for I had made up my mind not to tell you anything about it to-night."

"Very good. That's capital. I owe you something for that. Delicious!" exclaimed Mr. Sloperton again, rubbing his hands with unfeigned delight. "Everything you say confirms what my friend Barton told me about you. But, as I was saying, I know all about you, now you shall know all about me, and then we shall understand each other better."

"But if that is all the business you have with me," said I, rising from my chair, "I had better go, for I——"

"Better and better!" exclaimed Mr. Sloperton, again jumping from his seat and clasping me in his arms. "Exquisite! Delicious!"

So, seeing that I had no other recourse but to sit still and wait for the gradual development of Mr. Sloperton's secret business, I sat down again, resolved to allow him to have things his own way; it was growing late, and it was now a matter of indifference to me where I spent the remainder of the night. So I merely said to him, "Very well, my friend, if you will have me to remain until morning, I shall not quarrel with you. But truly your conduct is so strange that I am rather impatient to learn the cause of it."

"You think it strange, ha?" said he, as if surprised.

"Very," said I.

"Well, you are a devilishly piquant fellow, as my friend Barton said, and I like you the better for it. But let's to business. We must have some more coffee first, Antoine! Why the fellow is asleep on an ottoman. Confound the devilishly luxuriousascal, I shall have to discharge him from my service."

A well directed hickory nut having hit Antoine upon his forehead, and roused that saffron colored personage from his slumber, we had a fresh pot of coffee, and greatly to my relief Mr. Sloperton braced himself up in his chair and began to talk in a more coherent and earnest manner than he had done at any time before.

"The fact is, my dear fellow," said he, once more, "you are just the man I have long been in search of. I have been going

through the world like what's his name, the old fellow with the lantern, in search of——"

"Hark! hush!" I exclaimed, jumping from my seat and overturning Antoine, who stood behind me with the coffee-pot in his hand.

"What in God's name has happened, my dear fellow," said Mr. Sloperton, with alarm in his countenance, as he too started from his chair.

But I had no time to make any explanations; without looking for my hat, or stopping to say another word, I jumped to the door, and ran along the gallery into which it opened; but in my hurry I turned in the wrong direction, and instead of finding myself at the top of the stair-way which led to the principal entry below, I found myself at the head of a narrow pair of stairs which communicated with the kitchen of the Hotel. Discovering my mistake at a glance, I turned back, and in my haste to get below, came very near knocking Mr. Sloperton down stairs, for he had followed me out to enquire the cause of my sudden flight. Shoving him aside, I jumped down the broad stair-way, and entered the bar-room which was so filled with tobacco smoke that I could not distinguish the faces of the people who were present, at a glance, but it did not require long time to satisfy me that the object of my pursuit was not there. I asked the bar-keeper if a gentlemen had entered the bar-room within a few minutes.

He had seen no one.

I glanced on the register, but could not find the name I searched for, and immediately ran into the street, which was nearly deserted, for it was now quite late, and looked in vain for the form I longed once more to behold.

Perhaps the reader will remember that I have alluded to the very remarkable tone of Captain St. Hugh's voice, or at least of its remarkable sound to me. He had a peculiar dry cough, which could not be mistaken for the voice of any other person by any body who had once heard it; and to me, who had so often listened to it, and in whose ears it sounded sweeter than music.

it could not fail to be distinguished among a thousand voices. Just as Mr. Slopperton commenced his explanation, I heard the same dry, quick cough, apparently of a person passing his room door; it made my heart leap with delight as the sound fell upon my ear, for I knew that it was my father's voice, or, at least, I thought so, and this will explain the cause of my sudden movement, for I rushed out with the confident expectation of seeing my father in the hall. But I was miserably disappointed, and after inquiring at the bar if any person lived at the Hotel resembling Captain St. Hugh, I returned to Mr. Slopperton so depressed in my feelings that I could hardly sit and listen to him while he told me his strange reasons for seeking my acquaintance.

I was not given to waking-dreams, and was but little subject to superstitious fancies; but being satisfied that Captain St. Hugh had not been in the Hotel, I could not help thinking that it was his spirit that I had heard, for the fact of my hearing his voice was too strongly impressed upon my mind to be doubted. It had just become fashionable again to believe in ghosts, and the intercommunication of the spirits of the living and the departed, and I had heard so many stories told of the mesmerisers, and the wonders of clairvoyance, that I could not dismiss from my thoughts the idea that something fearful had happened to my father, or was about to happen to me. It will be seen, in the end, what cause I had for such apprehensions, but I must not now anticipate my story by making any revelations out of the proper place.

There was certainly some great mystery connected with Capt. St. Hugh's strange disappearance; his neglect to inform me of his designs, and his total abandonment of me after having been at such great pains to find me. When I remembered the circumstances under which I had, as I thought, seen him in the street, and my losing sight of him, I no longer doubted that I had, in reality seen his spirit, and I felt more sad and sorrowful, than I had done before since I woke upon my mother's breast, and found that while I had unconsciously slept there, her spirit had fled forever.

"Good Heavens! my dear fellow," exclaimed Mr. Slopperton, as I returned to his room, "what a change in your countenance! Pray what was the cause of this odd freak of yours. Is it only one of your devilish piquant little ways, or was it something really existing? Let me know all about it."

But I had no heart to make any explanations to Mr. Slopperton; he was not the kind of person to whom I could confide my sorrows, and I therefore begged that he would go on with his story at the point where I had interrupted him, and not take any further notice of my abrupt departure from his room.

"Oh, very well. It is rather piquant and pleasant, rather *outré*, but it helps to diversify life, and makes something of a sensation."

"But, by-the-way, where was I? O, I remember going about like old what's his name among the classics, with a lantern in my hand, looking for a devilishly piquant, honest intelligent fellow like yourself. And I have found you at last, and mean to make your fortune."

CHAPTER V.

MR. SLOPPERTON EXPLAINS HIMSELF.

Mr. Slopperton made so awkward an attempt to let himself out, as he expressed it, and seemed so much at a loss how to begin his explanation, that I began to suspect he had been guilty of some piece of villany, and wanted me to assist in keeping the secret for him; but he had not the energy to be a rascal, although, as I afterwards found, he did not lack the inclination.

"—Yes, my dear fellow," he repeated again, "I have been looking all my life for a devilish honest, truth-loving, candid, discriminating, clever fellow, like yourself, and I never found one until I stumbled upon you. My friend Barton told me about you, and I said at once, he's my man."

To be just to Mr. Slopperton, I believe he thought me to be all he said.

"Now, my dear fellow, you must know I have always had a plenty of money. I have travelled in Europe, I have been feted, and dined, and educated in polite learning, I have been sought after by men, and courted by women; I might have married splendid girls, first families, brilliant connexions, great estates, and every thing of that sort, but nothing of the kind pleases me; I could see through them all. It was not me they wanted, my dear fellow, but my money. Don't you see?"

"I can easily imagine it to be so," I said.

"Well, that's capital! That's encouraging, Pepper. Only keep it up. But what man of generous impulses, or a soul to save, wants to be courted for the sake of his money? I would sooner be a beggar, Pepper, and receive a good, honest, hearty, well-meant kick, from every other man I meet, than to be so fawned upon and run after by a pack of heartless rascals, who care for nothing but my money."

"I should think so," said I, "but surely you must sometimes have met with an honest friend?"

"Never, never," said he, "and the strangest part of the thing is, that I never gave any of the rascals anything in my life, and yet they will run after me. Catch me giving them any money! No, no, I know better than that; I should be worse off than ever if I did. It would be like holding out a piece of meat to induce a pack of hungry dogs to quit you. I know by myself that no man esteems me more for having money than if I were poor; for I know that I do not care the value of a broken tumbler for what a man has, but for what he is."

"And yet," said I, "you choose for your associates the rich rather than the poor."

"Not at all, not at all," said he, "I don't choose anybody. They all choose me. Don't you see that I have invited you to dine with me, and you are not rich, according to your own confession; but you are honest, and that is better. Every body flatters me; my tailor tells me I have a devilish fine figure, and for that matter, Pepper, it isn't bad, but why tell me of it? Do

you think he would if he didn't charge for it in his devilish exorbitant bill?"

"Probably not," said I.

"Of course he wouldn't, and I know it, too; and so I make him discount twenty-five per cent every time he brings in his account. They don't get the advantage of me, Pepper, with all their flattery. Look at my portrait up there now, see how it's flattered. That fellow, McGilp, the artist who painted it, has given me a devilishly brilliant red and white complexion, when you see I am almost yellow, but to tell the truth, Pepper, I was rather fresh when I sat to him; he has given me a pair of eyes as black and bright as an angel's, and the most devilishly piquant smile you ever saw on a man's face. There's nothing like it on mine, you see."

"Then why did you hang the portrait up in your room, and pay the lying painter for misrepresenting you?" I asked.

"Why, the fact is, the picture is not altogether unlike me, and as Barton said it was devilish good, what could I do? But, they are all alike. I can get no truth out of a living soul, and I was going to give up the search and turn misanthrope, and curse the hollow-hearted world all the rest of my life, when I happened to complain to Barton, and he told me that you were my man."

"It was very good of him," I said, "for I did not think he entertained a particularly good opinion of me."

"Well, that is odd, to be sure," said Mr. S'opperton, with a puzzled look, "for he told me that if I found fault with every body for their deceitfulness, I should seek out that most remarkably truthful gentleman, Tom Pepper, who would be sure to please me; and a hard time I had to find you, my dear fellow. And now I will tell you my scheme. I will put myself in your keeping. I will tell you all my secrets, all my hopes, aspirations, and aims; you shall read me as you would a book, and tell me, like an honest critic, if there ever were such a person, exactly what you think of me."

"But I may not be willing to read you, for you may prove a

very disagreeable book to me, which I may not consider worth criticising?" I said.

"Ah! But you will for money?"

"If I can find no better employment, perhaps I may?"

"I will pay you well, provided you are true to me. I don't expect to have your services for nothing. You don't care anything at all about me?"

"Of course I do not."

"Excellent!" he exclaimed, rubbing his hands together, "and you rather despise me than otherwise?"

"Yes."

"Good! And of course you wouldn't even take the trouble to tell me of my faults unless I paid you well."

"I think not."

"Better and better! So I shall at least spend some of my money with the satisfaction of getting the full value for it. I will pay you well, my dear fellow, if you don't spare me; tell me of all my weaknesses and follies, all my vices, but them I know pretty well myself, by the way. Reflect me like a mirror."

"And you will consult me as often, perhaps?"

"My dear fellow, you have said it."

"And, like your mirrors, set me in a frame work of gold."

"Excellent! What a devilishly piquant fellow you are. I will give you a check on Barton, for a thousand dollars, at once. Antoine, bring my desk."

Antoine placed a small writing desk before him, and, taking out his check-book, he did actually write an order upon the Bank of which Mr. Barton was president, payable to my order, for a thousand dollars. I thought he must be a lunatic, but he appeared so cool and collected that I saw he was in earnest, and putting the check in my pocket, I told him he might consider my services at his command, and that I would begin to repay my obligations by assuring him that I thought him one of the most ridiculous men I had yet encountered.

"That will do in a general way," said he, "but that is not

exactly the style of criticism that I want. I must have something more definite and particular. Why am I ridiculous? What particular thing do you see in me that makes you form that opinion of me?"

I told him that it would take so much time to analyze him entirely that he must be content to take my opinion of him in detail, as the nature of his thoughts or actions were developed to me.

"The very thing I want, my dear fellow. You are an angel to me. But, of course, you will find some good in me?" said he.

I assured him that if I did, he should have the benefit of the discovery.

Mr. Sloperton seemed really grateful to me, and appeared to enjoy my candor excessively; he furthermore revealed to me an ambitious scheme which he had planned for hearing himself abused in the most satisfactory manner, by getting himself nominated for Congress. I told him that he could not have adopted a better plan for getting himself slandered, than by setting up for some public office, for if he had a character as pure as an angel's, and were possessed of the wisdom of Washington, he would be sure of being reviled worse than a thief by all the newspapers opposed to him in politics.

"That will do very well as far as it goes," said he, "but I am not covetous of abuse. What I want is the truth; if people must lie about me, I must confess, my dear fellow, that I would prefer they should speak well of me, rather than evil. But it must be devilishly piquant to read whole columns of abuse of yourself in a newspaper. It must give one a devilishly delightful sensation to know that you are of consequence enough to the world for men to sit down and invent lies about you. I have been trying to write a book, so that I might get abused by the critics."

"And couldn't you succeed?" said I.

"No. It was the worst speculation I ever tried. I spent a year, sweating over the devilish thing; I sat up late at night, I let forth the most moral theories in political philosophy, I invented a new

system of politics and wove into my book a good many devilishly sly and piquant infidelities, exactly like the same things which had made Hume, and Voltaire, and Rousseau so notorious; I had the book published by the most respectable publishing house, and a devilish sight of money it cost me too, for advertising; but after all my trouble and expense, nobody would ever consent to abuse the book or its author. There seemed to be a conspiracy among the critics to let me alone. All the notice it ever received was from the daily papers, every one of them declaring, in the most remarkably unanimous manner, that the imprint of the publisher was a sufficient guaranty of its merit, and that no gentleman's library could be considered complete without it; and every gentleman seemed to regard this as a sufficient warning to keep it out of his library, for not a single copy was ever sold, except by the editors who sent their presentation copies to the Auction Rooms."

"So you wisely abandoned the foolish attempt to gain notoriety by writing a book, I suppose."

"Of course I did, my dear fellow."

"And now you are going into politics, where you will not succeed much better," said I. "You will probably get abuse enough, if you should be able to buy a nomination for any office, but nothing else."

"Very good," said he, "I am willing to try; and what with the papers abusing me on one hand, you telling me the truth on the other, my dear fellow, and with a good dinner, I think I shall have a most devilishly delightful and piquant time of it."

"Why don't you," said I, "by way of an experiment try the effects of being honest yourself, and treating other people with the degree of candor which you pretend to desire?"

"Pretend!" he exclaimed. "Come, but that is rather blunt, Pepper, do you say I am only pretending to love truth and honesty?"

"I think it is nothing more," said I.

O, right, I understand. Ha! ha! ha! Come, now, you may

tell me just what you think, but you will think differently when you know me better. What do you think I gave you the check on my Bank for, if I were not in earnest? A thousand dollars, Pepper, is a good deal of money to pay away in a joke."

"Still I don't believe that you are in earnest," I said, "and when you find out how meanly I think of you, you will quarrel with me for my honesty."

"Never! never! Try me and see. I am determined to know myself. I like you better than ever, my dear fellow. Come to me to-morrow, and see if I cannot bear all your devilishly sarcastic and cutting truths."

I knew too well that he would not hold out long, for I saw that under all his pretended love of truth, that his selfish nature was only craving for flattery, and that he was unconsciously trying to bribe me to deceive him with a good opinion of himself, while he was pretending to purchase my candid opinions of him. He did not want his wounds probed but tickled.

I left him with his face flushed, and his blood evidently in a ferment. He had gained a sensation, if nothing more, and I had gained a thousand dollars, which elated my feelings to the highest point, for with so large a sum of money in my pocket I thought I might safely venture upon getting married, and I knew that Pauline, if I could gain access to her, would not refuse to share my fortunes for the future.

Remembering my promise to Mr. Bassett, not to engage in any new undertaking without first informing him of it, the next morning I hurried to him, and finding him in his counting room, told him of my engagement with Mr. Sloperton. He laughed heartily at my story, but looked grave when I told him that I fancied I had heard my father's voice the night before, and cautioned me again not to indulge in such vagaries of fancy. He was quite incredulous as to Mr. Sloperton's intentions to pay me a thousand dollars for telling him what I thought of him, and when I showed him the check on Mr. Barton's Bank, thought that the poor man must be out of his mind.

Mr. Bassett advised me not to spend the money until I became satisfied that Mr. Sloperton was in possession of his ordinary faculties. I was somewhat dashed by this very reasonable advice; for I could not but admit that it would be extremely dishonest in me to take the poor man's money for such a trifling service, unless he were perfectly competent to manage his affairs. He certainly did not lack for shrewdness in managing his pecuniary affairs, according to his own account; but I determined to take the advice of Mr. Bassett, and wait for a further development of Mr. Sloperton's whim before I availed myself of his liberality; and Mr. Bassett having offered to loan me a trifle on the check, for I persisted in refusing all assistance from him in the shape of a gift, I left it with him as security, and again sallied out into the world in search of an occupation. As to accepting the post of truth-teller to such a bundle of vanities as Mr. Sloperton, even though he paid me handsomely for doing it, I could not for a moment think of. It was too much like the situation of the dummy at an Egyptian feast, to remind the guests of their mortality. I had no repugnance to telling Mr. Sloperton my opinion of him once, or twice, even though he gave me no recompense for my candor, but to sit at his elbow and witness his self-delusions only to expose them to him, was a task I felt quite unwilling to undertake, and I resolved at our next meeting to tell him what I thought of his weaknesses, and then leave him; it was not a business of my own seeking. I felt impatient for the appointed hour of meeting, that I might be rid of him. Having no home, I had made a convenience of the public room at Sykes', where I had first encountered Mr. Wilton, and I again sought a refuge there to dissipate the time by poring over the newspapers until the hour should arrive for calling on Mr. Sloperton. This hotel was a common lounging-place for all the odd characters about town, who seemed to be drawn together by some strong influence, which operated upon me as powerfully as upon many others in my condition. Actors out of engagements, clerks looking for situations, lawyers in want of practice,

doctors without patients, reporters without employment, bankrupt merchants, ruined brokers, desperate artists and speculators of all kinds. These were the regular frequenters of the hotel, but as they all had peculiar characteristics, and having no business of their own to attend to, were well informed in respect to the business of every body else, they made up a very agreeable mixture of society which proved very attractive to the more orderly and better employed classes, who used to come in there to smoke a cigar and drink a glass of punch, and learn all the scandalous news that was floating about town. I had no aversion to visiting here when I came as a looker-on, but now that I felt myself a constituent part of the motley crowd, it gave me an extremely uneasy feeling; and, instead of being amused with the oddities around me, I sat gloomily by myself, devising some means for my future support. The poor devils who, like myself, came to Sykes' to beguile their idle time, put on a very light-hearted air, and drank, and smoked, played at billiards, and discussed politics, as though the world went lightly with them; but it was easy enough to pick out among them those who had nearly reached the lowest point of desperation, and were only debating in their minds whether it were better to die disgracefully by their own hands or live dishonorably by the hands of others, and those who had but entered upon their career of idle dissipation, and had not yet tasted the bitterness which they were doomed to swallow. I felt in no humor to fraternize with any of the unfortunates around me, but directly a gentleman seated himself at the little table where I sat, and without speaking to me looked at me very intently. He was smoking a cigar, and did not appear conscious that he ever and anon puffed a cloud of smoke in my face, although he sat and watched it very closely, and, as I frowned upon him, looked quite delighted at the indignation which I must have shown. He was by no means an impertinent looking man, and there was a certain expression in his countenance which pleased me, even while so indignant at his impudence. He was well dressed, although a little *outré* in his gen-

eral appearance; his face was very pale, his forehead high and broad, his eyes grey, and his hair, which was a rich glossy brown, hung low down his neck in thick curls; he wore his shirt collar turned over his vest, and only fastened in front with a small black ribbon. But, what added more than all to the singularity of his appearance, he wore his beard naturally, which at that time was very unusual, except among pirates and other desperadoes who had the courage to follow the instincts of their nature and allow their hair to grow as God designed it should. For it was then considered either the mark of an abandoned villain, or of a silly fop, to wear the beard after the manner of the Grecian sages and God's prophets.

Seeing that the man was puffing his cigar smoke in my face by design, and not from thoughtlessness, my blood rose at once, and I said to him—

"You are an impudent rascal, sir."

"Do you think so?" he mildly replied.

This quiet response only excited me the more; but, without heeding my fierce looks he drew in another mouthful of smoke, and again blew it about my head. As if to assure me that he did it on purpose to insult me, he exclaimed—

"It is very beautiful!"

By this time I had become so fiercely roused that I jumped up and struck at his face, but he parried the blow and said—

"O, I beg your pardon. Are you angry?"

"Angry!" said I, "do you insult me again, you villain?"

"O, I am very sorry," said he, as mildly as before; "sit down and let me apologize to you."

I was so entirely overcome by the manner and soothing voice of this strange person, that quite unconsciously I sat down again and looked him in the face for an explanation.

"Do you know," said he, looking at me and smiling, "that I like you very much?"

"It is news to me, I assure you," I replied, "and I should never have guessed as much from your manner of treating me."

"Wouldn't you?" he said, as pleasantly as before.

"Pray, who are you?" I asked.

"O, then, you don't know me? My name is Ardent," said he, "the Artist."

"Ardent, the Artist," I repeated; "well, Mr. Ardent, I never heard of you before, and before I extend my acquaintance with you, I must have an apology for your rudeness to me."

"Did you think me rude? O, I am very sorry, very sorry; I hope I did not hurt your feelings. I beg your pardon."

"Enough," said I, "but be so good as to tell me what could have caused you to puff your filthy tobacco smoke in my face?"

"O! was it that that annoyed you?" said he, "I am very sorry about it. But you must know that you have got exactly the head on your shoulders that I have been looking for this long while, and I wanted to see what effect it would have when partially obscured by a mist, and so I blew the smoke above your head, and was so charmed with it that I kept repeating it quite unconsciously. You will forgive me, won't you?"

"Freely," said I, for I could not doubt his sincerity, and my curiosity was piqued to discover something further about this odd specimen of humanity. He was so wholly unlike anybody that I had yet seen that I felt a sudden attachment to him.

"Come," said Mr. Ardent, "go with me to my painting room and I will show you the figure that I am painting, for which I want your head."

I was but too happy to get away from Sykes', and as Mr. Ardent promised to be an amusing acquaintance, and as I had a great fondness for pictures, I very gladly accepted his invitation, and rose to go.

"Have you paid for your drink?" said he. As I had not I stepped to the bar, and Mr. Ardent added, "won't you have the goodness just to pay for a glass of punch and a couple of cigars that I had?"

Of course I could not refuse so polite a request.

On our way to Mr. Ardent's room he delighted me by the

originality and boldness of his remarks; his entire freedom from the conventional hypocrisies and errors of the day; the earnestness of his manner and the mildness of his voice. It was in vain that I tried to reply to his remarks, for when I uttered a word it immediately suggested to him something else, and before we reached his room, which was in the upper story of a house far up Broadway, I had listened to a greater amount of philosophical truth than I had ever heard uttered before. He seemed to be inspired upon every subject that he broached, candidly acknowledging his ignorance on certain points, but speaking with the confidence of an oracle upon others, particularly in relation to art. He quite astounded me by the easy confidence with which he uttered what I at first thought must be heresies, because they were contrary to my preconceived notions, but which I soon received as truths, from the earnest and simple manner in which they were conveyed to me. I felt happy in having at last lighted upon an intelligent candid man, one who could instruct me by his conversation without disgusting me with his insincerity or vulgarity, and I speedily forgot that he had at first offended me so deeply by his seemingly gross misconduct. When I entered his room I was greatly amused at the incongruousness of its furniture, and the wild disorder which seemed to reign supreme there. It was the first time I had looked upon an Artist's studio, and was not, therefore, prepared to see all the strange sights which such receptacles for curiosities generally present.

There were a great many casts of Venuses and Apollos, empty champagne bottles, elephant's teeth, a lay figure with a white satin robe over its shoulders, but with nothing on its legs, a Roman shield, a gothic chair, a plaster horse, and a marble dog, all placed together in one corner; the walls were covered with cartoon drawings of heads, arms and torsos; some of them were finished with exquisite nicety, and all of them displayed a masterly hand. There were landscapes, half finished portraits and diagrams in abundance, but nothing coarse or vulgar.

There was a magnificent mahogany chair, covered with crimson velvet, placed on a kind of throne in front of which stood an unfinished portrait of a lady, which Mr. Ardent took down and turned to the wall before I had an opportunity to mark it particularly, and in spite of all my entreaties he refused to allow me to look at it. One corner of the room was screened off by a large mounted canvass which he turned round, and showed me the figure of Apollo, which he had spoken of. I was charmed by the majestic beauty of the figure, the dignity of expression, which the Artist had imparted to the features, the depth and richness of the color, and the purity with which the figure, although entirely nude, seemed to be invested.

"Come," said he, taking up his maul-stick, brushes and palette; "take off your hat and try to assume that fierce look which you put on when you struck at me."

"I cannot assume a look," I replied, "I can only look as I feel."

"Well, now, I like that much better," said he, "you look precisely as I wish you to. Only remain so for a moment." And he began to touch upon his picture as I stood before him.

"Won't you take off your coat and cravat?" he said. "Thank you. If you could take off your vest conveniently," he said, in his persuasive manner, "I should like it very much."

I took off my vest as he requested, and, to oblige him still further, took off my shirt, then my pantaloons, until at last I stood before him as naked as the figure he was painting; and I was so charmed by his conversation, and so desirous of obliging him, that I felt quite unconscious of my rather novel position. He continued talking and painting, only interrupting himself occasionally to request me to vary my position, and I listened to him without the least diminution of interest in his conversation. But we were suddenly interrupted by somebody turning the handle of the door, and as he had neglected to lock it, I had but barely time to jump behind the canvass, before the door was opened, and a lady entered.

"Ah! How do you do, Mrs. Napkin?" said Mr. Ardent, "are you pretty well this morning?"

"No. I am not well, and you know I am not," said the lady.

"Ah! I am very sorry," said the artist.

"Then pay me my money. I don't want anybody to be sorry for me that owes me money," said the lady, seating herself.

"It is very unfortunate for me," said he, deprecatingly, "but really I have not got a shilling this morning."

"A pretty fellow, you are," said she, to be up here painting naked figures, and eating my bread, and my children in want of shoes to their feet.

"Good Heavens! Mrs. Napkin," said he, "it is very unreasonable in you to talk in that manner. I have already given you my watch, that is worth more than five times the amount I owe you; you have taken the silver palette that was given to me by the Academy, besides keeping all my wardrobe, and I have paid you a good deal of money besides, since you turned me out of your house."

"Well, all I know is, I want my money, and I won't leave without I get it, or its full value," said the lady. "Every body must take care of themselves in this selfish world."

"But, my dear friend," said he —

"O, it's a very easy thing to say my dear friend," said Mrs. Napkin, "but that's not giving me my money. I must have my money. However, if you won't pay me, I will just pay myself."

"For God's sake, don't touch those things," exclaimed Mr. Ardent, and hereupon a scuffle took place between the artist and his creditor, and before I could discover what they were about I heard the door slam to, and the artist looking behind the canvass, exclaimed, in great consternation, "My dear fellow, she has run off with all your clothes!"

CHAPTER VI.

"It is very distressing," said the artist, "to be in debt, and particularly to women, they are so urgent in their demands, and so unreasonable in their expectations. I really believe that I have paid my landlady three or four times the amount of her bill, and yet she continues to haunt me."

"My good fellow," said I, "if you have paid the woman, of course you have taken a receipt from her."

"A receipt!" said the artist. "Well, that is something I never thought of. I wish I had, for she is continually threatening me with a law suit."

"Very well," said I, "if you have been so careless you must suffer for your negligence; but that is no fault of mine, and I am not going naked this chilly weather, because you have got a dishonest landlady."

"Ah! I am very sorry!" said Mr. Ardent; "but what can I do?"

"What can you do?" I replied. "It strikes me that the way is very plain before you; go get a warrant against the harridan for stealing my clothes, and I will wait here for you to return with them. But you must be back soon, for I have an appointment to keep."

"Ah! But consider that she is a woman," said the artist.

"A woman! She is a hag!" I exclaimed, growing vexed at the coolness of the painter. "But do as you choose, either strip and give me your own clothes, or go and get mine; I have an appointment to keep, and I cannot break it."

"Have you?" said he; "that is so unfortunate. But just stand up for a few minutes, until I finish glazing over the head with this madder that I have got on my palette."

"No, no, I cannot wait longer," I said.

"You must, or the effect of my picture will be spoiled," said he.

"But, I tell you, that I must be gone, said I. "it is impossible. I cannot."

"Then I swear to you by all that is sacred, if you don't I will not let you budge from the room to night," he exclaimed, with a determined air, and looking me sternly in the face.

I saw there was no use in expostulating, and, as the enthusiast had me completely in his power, I could do nothing but yield to his demands; and, placing myself in the proper *pose*, he commenced rubbing on his confounded madder upon the canvass, which seemed to afford him as much pleasure as it did me chagrin. At last he laid down his palette and brush, and, throwing his arms around my neck, said—

"You are very good, and I am very grateful to you."

"But," said I, "this is getting to be a very serious matter, my friend; you seem to forget that I am standing here without a rag of clothes to my back."

"Very true," said he, "you are in a rather awkward box. But I will go out and try to get your clothes back. But suppose that Mrs. Napkin will not deliver them without I pay her what she claims to be her due? I have got no money. Couldn't you lend me some, and I will pay you very soon?"

"Do you forget," said I, impatiently, "that the woman has not only carried off my clothes, but everything that was in my pockets?"

"So she has. What shall I do?" again said the artist, as he stood hesitatingly at the door.

"Allow me to suggest to you," said I, "the propriety of bringing me a suit of your own clothes then, that I may be relieved from my awkward position."

"It happens very unfortunately," said he, "that I have left my entire wardrobe in pledge for a small sum that I owe another landlady, for a trifling board bill. I declare to you that I don't know what to do."

There was but one alternative for me, so I wrote a note to Mr. Bassett, requesting him to give the bearer twenty dollars, and told the artist after he procured the money to obtain my clothes and bring them to me; he then left me, locking the door

and taking the key with him. He was gone a long time, and I had to leap about the room to keep me from freezing. I partly clothed myself by robbing a lay figure of its mantle of red velvet, which stood in a corner, and tried to amuse myself by looking into Mr. Ardent's portfolios, and examining his unfinished pictures, which were turned to the wall. I was as much astonished at the beauty of his paintings, their surprising harmony of color, and purity of feeling, as I was at his simplicity of character and elevated mind. He seemed, in truth, to be a singular compound of lofty genius, with a mind of more than child-like simplicity. His want of tact in the ordinary affairs of life, was doubtless owing to his mind being so wholly absorbed in his art; for, as an eagle would starve on a dunghill, where a barn-door fowl would easily pick up a subsistence, so do such men as Ardent starve in the world, while meaner persons contrive to live in ease and splendor. I could readily pardon the artist for the very uncomfortable position into which he had unwittingly thrust me, although my vexation was almost unbearable. I had sufficient time to get cool before he returned, and, indeed, when I heard his step in the passage I was so completely exhausted, for it was nearly dark, that my teeth chattered with the cold. He had a covered basket in his hand, which I supposed, of course, contained my clothes; and as I demanded them hastily, he said—

"I have not got your clothes, my good friend, but I have got you something to eat, and here is a bottle of champagne to warm you."

Vexed and disappointed as I felt, I was too happy in having something to eat to reprove him, and immediately fell to upon the cold tongue, bread and butter, and champagne, which he had brought me. We grew very merry together, and I laughed heartily at his perplexities in trying to get back my clothes. He had obtained the money from Mr. Bassett without difficulty, although he had to wait a couple of hours for him to return to his counting-room from dinner, and at last had been so vexed at the exorbitant demands of his landlady, that he swore that he would not

"Then I swear to you by all that is sacred, if you don't I will not let you budge from the room to night," he exclaimed, with a determined air, and looking me sternly in the face.

I saw there was no use in expostulating, and, as the enthusiast had me completely in his power, I could do nothing but yield to his demands; and, placing myself in the proper *pose*, he commenced rubbing on his confounded madder upon the canvass, which seemed to afford him as much pleasure as it did me chagrin. At last he laid down his palette and brush, and, throwing his arms around my neck, said—

"You are very good, and I am very grateful to you."

"But," said I, "this is getting to be a very serious matter, my friend; you seem to forget that I am standing here without a rag of clothes to my back."

"Very true," said he, "you are in a rather awkward box. But I will go out and try to get your clothes back. But suppose that Mrs. Napkin will not deliver them without I pay her what she claims to be her due? I have got no money. Couldn't you lend me some, and I will pay you very soon?"

"Do you forget," said I, impatiently, "that the woman has not only carried off my clothes, but everything that was in my pockets?"

"So she has. What shall I do?" again said the artist, as he stood hesitatingly at the door.

"Allow me to suggest to you," said I, "the propriety of bringing me a suit of your own clothes then, that I may be relieved from my awkward position."

"It happens very unfortunately," said he, "that I have left my entire wardrobe in pledge for a small sum that I owe another landlady, for a trifling board bill. I declare to you that I don't know what to do."

There was but one alternative for me, so I wrote a note to Mr. Bassett, requesting him to give the bearer twenty dollars, and told the artist after he procured the money to obtain my clothes and bring them to me; he then left me, locking the door

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pay her a dollar, and had to come away without my clothes after all.

"Well," said I, "it was very good of you to think of bringing me something to eat. How much money have you got left?"

"The truth is, my dear fellow," said he, embracing me again, "I have not got any. But you will not be vexed with me? I am very sorry it happened so. But what could I do? I remembered that I wanted more colors before I could finish my large picture, and so I stepped into De Bistre's to procure what I wanted, and when I gave the mercenary wretch the twenty-dollar bill which I received from your friend, would you believe that the rascal refused to return me my change, and told me he would place the balance to my credit."

"Heaven save you!" I exclaimed, "what shall I do to-night for my clothes?"

"I am very sorry," ejaculated Mr. Ardent again, "but, how could I help it? I did not think that De Bistre was such a kind of man."

"And pray," I asked, "how did you procure the champagne and cold tongue?"

"O, I left the madder which I bought in pledge for the amount," said he.

So I, was now worse off than before, and as it was now quite dark, I gave up all hopes of being liberated for the night, and after Mr. Ardent had lighted a candle, which he stuck into the neck of the champagne bottle, I wrapped myself up in the old fragments of cloth which I found in his room, and forgot all my perplexities while he delivered to me a lecture on the principles of his art, which was so mingled up with shrewd observations on men, and profound reflections on the philosophy of life, that I felt myself not only amply compensated for all the trouble he had put me to, but indebted to him for his instruction.

How long he would have continued to talk I know not, for his thoughts seemed to create other thoughts as fast as he uttered them, and he gave no signs of exhaustion nor of weariness;

but the candle having burned down to the end of the wick suddenly left us in total darkness, and Mr. Ardent exclaimed, "What a stupid creature I am! A thought has just occurred to me. My dear fellow, I will let you put on my clothes, and go about your business, while I remain here to night, and if you please you can come and relieve me in the morning, for I expect a gentleman here who is to purchase the picture which I am painting. I shall then have money enough, for I shall not sell it for a shilling less than five thousand dollars."

"That is a good round sum," said I, "and I hope you may get it. But I fear there are few of our merchants whose enthusiasm in art will allow them to pay so large a sum for a picture."

"Then," said he, "I swear they shall never have it, I will burn it first."

Mr. Ardent then told me that the painters of England and France, who were much inferior to himself, obtained much larger prices for their works from the noblemen who patronized artists, and that he should not undervalue his work by taking a less sum. I commended his self-appreciation; but I reminded him that pictures, like other things, were only worth what they would bring, and that, as he painted for money, he must be content with such prices as could be obtained. I found it was of no use to argue with him on this point, for he seemed to be impressed with an idea that every one would be as sensible of the merit of his work as himself; and having no desire to go out for the night only, I declined the offer of his clothes, and requested him to lock me in, and return to me in the morning with some breakfast, when I would devise some measures for extricating both of us from our difficulties. I intended to make use of the check which Mr. Sloperton had given me, not only to procure a new suit of clothes for myself, but also to loan the generous, but thoughtless man of genius sufficient money to enable him to complete his picture, which I did not doubt he could sell for a very large sum,

although he might not get the amount which he demanded for it.

I found that Mr. Ardent was one of those sincere men who believe that men mean what they say ; so taking me at my word, he embraced me again, and bidding me good night, locked the door, and left me to my repose.

He came the next morning, but not before I had been on my feet a couple of hours, and brought with him another covered basket with a comfortable breakfast. I was very impatient to get away, but as he requested me to stand for him while he gave another touch to his picture, that it might be in a good condition for his expected purchaser to look at, I could not refuse him so reasonable a request. I must confess, too, that I felt not a little flattered at the thought of standing for a portrait of Apollo, and as the artist had given the god a strong likeness to my features, I was not altogether displeased at the compliment, as I knew it to be sincere. While he was working at the picture and I stood naked before him, there was a knock at the door, and I had but barely time to leap behind the easel, against which the canvas rested, before his expected visitor entered bringing with him two persons whose presence gave me anything but a pleasant feeling.

"I say, Barton," exclaimed one of them, as they entered the studio, "what a devilishly piquant place this is to introduce a young lady. Don't you think so, Miss Pauline?"

"It is very well," replied a soft, sweet voice that made my heart tremble. "I see nothing very piquant."

"These are my friends, sir," said Mr. Barton, to the artist, "who have come to look at your picture and give me their opinion of it. Faith, it is rather piquant, I must confess, Sloperton. But it's a glorious thing, though, isn't it?"

"Glorious! What a figure!" said Mr. Sloperton. "But how devilishly surprisingly Apollo looks like your friend Tom Pepper, ha, Barton. What do you think, Miss Pauline?"

"Oh! it's a noble figure," said she, "and the face is truly the face of a god. You will buy it, will you not?"

"I am not sure that I will," said Mr. Barton, "it was an Apollo that I wanted and not a Mercury. It looks like that rascal, Tom Pepper, indeed. I don't like the sinister looks of the scamp."

"It is as honest a face as your own," said the artist, sharply.

"Devilishly piquant, that, Barton," said Mr. Sloperton. "It's not exactly the kind of talk for an artist to have to his employer ; decidedly not, I should say."

"You are unjust to the figure, I am sure," said Pauline, sweetly ; "the face strikes me as noble and full of truth and beauty."

"Full of roguery ! It's a rascally face," exclaimed Mr. Barton.

"Not so bad as that, my good fellow, not quite so bad," said Mr. Sloperton ; "but I must say, Mr. What's-your-name, that you have hit upon a most remarkable cast of features for your Apollo ; it is devilishly piquant and knowing, but it resembles one of the greatest liars in existence. Tut, tut, you never heard of such a reprobate ; the devil may be the father of lies, but the rascal that your Apollo resembles is the son of lies. Pretty fair that, ha ! Barton ? Devilishly piquant and all that sort of thing, but true, though, Miss Pauline."

Pauline made no reply, but I fancied that I felt her indignant looks through the pores of the canvas ; and I could hardly restrain myself from stepping from behind the picture and embracing her. It was not very pleasant to stand still and hear myself abused by Mr. Sloperton, whose change of opinion respecting my truthfulness angered me as much as it puzzled me. Nothing but my perfectly nude condition could have restrained me from jumping from behind the painting and demanding an explanation of his abuse. But I was doomed to a much greater mortification than any I had yet experienced, as the reader will shortly learn.

"The painting is pretty well," said Mr. Barton ; "there is a

sort of a Titianesque tone that is agreeable to the eye, but the subject is not a good one, and I think that the trees have too natural a look; I don't like this actuality in a picture; what I wish, Mr. Ardent, is a little more of the elevation of the old masters, the sort of ideality that you see in the works of Mopson, a very clever young fellow whom I sent to Rome, and who has made some excellent copies of the Byzantine school. You know what I mean?"

"No, I don't know, nor do I care," said the artist.

"O, I know, and I hate the whole of them most heartily," said Pauline; "they are those insipid-looking dolls, with gilt rainbows round their heads. They are detestable. I declare, now, I love this Apollo, and I would not exchange it for a room-full of those horrid creatures which your Mr. Mopson painted. Works, indeed! He may be a workman, but he is not an artist."

"Thank you," said Mr. Ardent, "your opinion is worth something to me."

"O, fie! Miss Pauline," said Mr. Slopperton; "you have not been in Europe, and have not had the advantage of studying the old masters. Now let me point out here the defects in this composition; just look at the arm, for instance; did you ever see such foreshortening in any of the old masters?"

"You shall point out no defects in my pictures," exclaimed Mr. Ardent; "neither shall you have it at all, I will burn it first."

And suddenly seizing the canvas, he lifted it from the easel, and before I could call out to him to stop I found myself standing face to face before the artist's visitors. Mr. Ardent at once discovered his blunder, but he was so much astonished, that, instead of putting back the picture and screening me from their gaze, he only exclaimed—

"Good heavens! what have I done!"

There was no retreat for me, so I could do nothing but stand still; Pauline made a hasty exit, followed by Mr. Barton, muttering something which I could not hear; and Mr. Slopperton remained long enough to say—

"That's a devilish piquant exhibition, Mr. What's-your-name. It will do, now and then, by way of a surprise to your visitors, but I would advise you not to repeat it too often. So, Mr. Pepper, this is one of your devilishly piquant freaks. It's pretty fair though, upon my word. Good morning to you." And so saying, Mr. Slopperton took his leave.

Ludicrous as my situation was, I felt too much chagrined to laugh, and Mr. Ardent seeing my confusion showed no disposition to be merry.

"Ah!" said I, "my friend, you do not know what harm you may have done me."

"I am very, very sorry," he replied; "but I could not help it. I was so exasperated to hear that ignorant fool talk about something which he did not understand that I forgot you were standing behind the picture. Forgive me. What can I do for you?"

"Get me my clothes," I replied, "that I may go and look for employment. I fear that you have ruined me."

"If I have," said he, "I shall love you better for it, and I will paint such a portrait of you as the world has never seen."

"But in the meantime I am suffering for the want of my clothes. You seem to forget that I am naked," said I.

"O! true. What shall I do! Heavens, was there ever such an unhappy wretch? But stop. I have an idea. What a dunce I was not to think of it before. Be patient but a moment or two and I will be back to you."

So saying, the artist put on his hat, and covering up his picture of Apollo with some old newspapers, he took it on his back and went out, locking the door after him. From his absent-mindedness, I was afraid that it would be a long while before he returned; but he disappointed me most agreeably by returning in a very short time, bringing my clothes with him in a bundle. I was too happy to be relieved from my awkward confinement to remain long after I had dressed myself; so, promising

to return to the artist's studio the next day, as he begged me to do, I bade him good-bye, and made haste to Mr. Bassett's office for the purpose of obtaining Mr. Slopperton's check that I might cash it at the bank. Mr. Bassett did not appear to be very well pleased to hear of my intimacy with Mr. Ardent, although he laughed very heartily when I related to him the manner in which I had been exposed to Miss Pauline and Mr. Barton. He cautioned me against frequenting the artist's studio, and said I should be in danger of falling into loose habits, if I did not get into a habit of loose thinking, by forming such intimacies.

By looseness, Mr. Bassett explained that he meant liberal, and by liberal he again explained that he meant unrestrained, and so he went on explaining what he meant until at last he grew embarrassed, and I said to him:

"What you mean, I find, is, that I should not think at all."

"Not exactly so," he replied. "A man who never thinks is a mere machine."

"And a man who does not think freely," I replied, "had better not think at all."

"There is some truth in what you say," he remarked; "but it is dangerous, my dear boy, to be a free-thinker. If there is no other danger in it, it is dangerous to the reputation of a business man; and as I hope to see you one yet, in spite of all your odd adventures, I must caution you against frequenting the society of such men as Mr. Ardent; for artists have a prescriptive privilege to be eccentric, and they may indulge in a great many absurdities, and even vices, which might be ruinous to a man of business."

I was here compelled to remind Mr. Bassett that he was now teaching me to be a hypocrite after having imbued me with a love of truth and sincerity; and that I was afraid he had lost his love of that transparency of conduct which he had taught me to cultivate in myself, or that he had lost his faith in his ideal abstraction of truthfulness. He blushed and smiled, but replied with a little embarrassment in his manner:

"You are right, Tom, and I acknowledge the justice of your reproof; I have particular motives which I cannot explain to you now, for requesting you not to visit Mr. Ardent again, and yet I would prefer that you should choose a different kind of person for your intimate friend; for you see that however well meaning and generous Mr. Ardent may be, he is continually liable to lead you into embarrassments by his thoughtlessness."

I could not but acknowledge the justice of Mr. Bassett's remarks, and promised him that after I had called to see Mr. Ardent once again, that I would then avoid him, and endeavor to establish my character for steadiness and sobriety, and live down all the evil reports which had been circulated respecting me. It was now too late to get the check cashed, but I took it from Mr. Bassett, and going to Mr. Slopperton's Hotel found that gentleman in his room, dressed in a Turkish costume, reclining on his sofa and refreshing himself with a bowl of soup. He jumped up at sight of me, and at first was going to look heroic, but he appeared to change his mind, and laughing in his half-earnest, vapid manner, said:

"Well, here you are again, my fine fellow, not according to promise, exactly, but as near as I expected, from you, you know, Mr. Pepper."

"Sir," said I, "you are changed in your manner towards me."

"Changed! well, that is devilishly piquant, to be sure. However, Mr. Pepper, let me do you the justice to say that the last time I saw you, you threw off all disguise. There was no concealment then. Faith, but it was a truthful and perfectly plain exhibition of yourself, and no mistake."

"Sir!"

"O! I understood it all. It was part of your plan to be perfectly candid and to conceal nothing. Ha! ha! Devilish piquant and ingenious. But it was shameful in you and the artist to do such a thing when a lady was in the case."

"Do you mean to insinuate that it was a concocted scheme between myself and Mr. Ardent?" said I.

"Very good! very good, indeed! Most capital joke! Piquant, but rather gross. By the way, it will ruin the artist, though. Your friend will pay dear for his humor, I can tell you."

"Come, sir," said I, "this is getting to be too serious a thing to banter about. I will not permit it."

"O, you won't? O, very well, if it is unpleasant to you, let us say no more about it. But it was a rather piquant affair, and it will read devilishly well in print. But, by the way, Mr. Pepper, you have not cashed the check I gave you?"

I told him that I had not, but that I should in the morning as I needed the money.

"Aha! That is lucky," said he; "the fact is, I want to make a small alteration in the check, just to add a trifle to it; I was not liberal enough to you for your very, very sincere remarks to me. Antoine, bring my desk. The check now, if you please, for one moment, Mr. Pepper."

"Here it is," said I, reaching it to him.

"That's it, that's it," he exclaimed, clutching it, and tearing it into bits. "That's it, Mr. Pepper, my good fellow, you will not have the pleasure of spending any of my money. Ha! ha! devilishly well done, Antoine, ha! Rather piquant, upon the whole."

"You wanted my candid opinion of you," said I, "and I promised that you should have it."

"O! of course; you gave it to me; very reliable it was too," said he.

"I saw that you were a poor, vain creature, and I intended you should know it, and the large bribe you offered me only made me the more determined to be perfectly sincere with you."

"Yes, yes, Mr. Pepper, I know all about your sincerity," said he, "I saw how capable you were of exposing yourself."

"I will permit no light allusions to that accident," said I. "You are not worthy of my anger, Mr. Sloperton, but I will not allow you to trifle with my feelings nor with the character of my friend; so have a guard upon your tongue. You thought

to bribe me to flatter you, and under the pretence of purchasing my candid opinion, hoped to induce me to flatter you. If you had not been a knave you would not have tried to make a knave of me, and if you had really wanted to know yourself you would have been content with your self-investigation. You are not only weak in your head, but you are bad in your heart. You begin with deceiving yourself, and end with deceiving others. You lied to me but just now in trying to obtain your check from me."

"Do you hear that, Antoine?" said he. "The rascal tells me that I lie!"

"Why shouldn't I?" said I. "Did you not wish me to tell you the truth?"

Mr. Sloperton turned very pale, and trembled as he walked across the floor. He approached me and said—

"So, Mr. Pepper, this is just what I expected. I knew you would abuse me. I have heard all about you. I will tell you how it was, my fine fellow. My friend Barton is a bit of a wag, and a devilish piquant fellow, too; I was telling him how I wished I could find one honest, truthtelling and sincere individual—and he, thinking that I knew what a notorious romancer you were, Pepper, said, by way of a joke, 'there's Tom Pepper, now, he is just the man for you, send for him, and he will tell you the truth; he is proverbial for it.' That's the way it occurred, my good fellow, you see I was rather green. It's no fault of mine. 'Twas a devilish good joke of Barton's, though, and he and Pauline, the young lady he is going to marry, had a good hearty laugh at my expense, when I told them what a dunce I had been."

"The young lady he is going to marry!" I exclaimed, with astonishment.

"The young lady he is going to marry, of course, or the young lady who is going to marry him; just as you please, Pepper, it makes no odds to me, not the least in the world, I assure you."

"Is it possible!" I exclaimed, "that Pauline is going to marry Mr Barton!"

"Possible! It is not only possible, but it is devilishly probable; in fact, it is positively the case, Pepper," said Mr. Sloperton; "no romance about it."

"No, no, there can be no romance about a marriage like that," I said, "but it must not be."

"Well, that is good. It would be a devilish piquant joke if old Barton should let his pretty pullet escape from his fingers after all. Have you any objection to the marriage, Mr. Pepper?"

"You shall know in good time," said I, "what objection I have."

And I turned to go out of the room, for I felt too hearty a contempt for Mr. Sloperton to stand and talk with him any longer, and my temper had not been rendered particularly placid by the revelation in respect to the marriage of Pauline. As I was going out of the door, Mr. Sloperton called me back.

"Stop one moment, Pepper," said he, drawing out his purse from the pocket of his dressing gown, and offering me a bank bill, "here's something to pay you for your trouble; it is not quite a thousand dollars, but it will discharge my obligations to you, my fine fellow."

Rejecting his proffered pay with an expression of contempt, I turned and left him, and once more found myself on the sidewalk penniless and without an occupation. I was loth to ask assistance again of Mr. Bassett, and cursed my unlucky fate which doomed me to such constant changes and reverses. I reproached my father, in my thoughts, for not binding me an apprentice to some honorable trade, and could not help thinking that Mr. Bassett had rendered me but a cruel kindness in learning me to hate hypocrisy and deceit, while he turned me adrift among knaves and hypocrites to earn my living. If he had placed me in a position independent of the rogueries of the world, he might

well have instructed me to be honest; but how was I to live among knaves and not be a knave myself. For a moment my determination wavered, as I looked around me and saw the evidences of prosperous cheating; there were quack doctors riding in their carriages, turn-coat patriots enjoying profitable offices, pettifogging attorneys living in splendid houses, and all manner of tradesmen respected for their fortunes which had been accumulated by deceiving their customers. But my irresolution lasted but a moment, just long enough to allow me to feel that I was in danger of backsliding, and to make me resolve afresh to preserve my integrity, and do honor to Captain St. Hugh, let the consequences be what they might. I had learned to hate hypocrisy and deceit, and I could never again be a knave. Let those who have become sick of the hollow-heartedness and hypocrisy of mankind, but make the experiment of acting honestly and truthfully themselves, keeping a watch upon their actions and words continually, and they will soon learn to be more tolerant of the knaveries of mankind. I have generally found that those who make the loudest complaints about the deceits of the world, are those whose own deceptions have brought them into contempt. It was not a very hard struggle for me to be honest, I had resolved to be so consistently upon principle, for I had no one dependent upon me whose welfare I felt fearful of sacrificing; I had only myself to look out for, and as I cared for nothing but to merit the good opinion of my supposed father, Captain St. Hugh, it mattered but little to me what disasters I fell into, if I could but keep my honour untarnished from the imputation of a lie. It was true that my past conduct had gained me a reputation for lying which had made my name a bye-word but I had such a profound belief in the omnipotence of Truth, that I knew I should be justified in the end. So it gave me no uneasiness, beyond a momentary feeling of anger, to hear myself spoken of in the manner in which Mr. Sloperton and Mr. Barton had alluded to me. I knew myself to be sincere and honest, and the inward consciousness of truth sustained me.

against all the outward marks of contempt which were shown me. Besides, I continued to entertain the expectation that something would yet happen to place me in possession of the property of my supposed ancestors, and perhaps some of my high toned feelings had their origin in the belief that I was the descendant of the chivalric old Sir Eustace, and was therefore bound to conduct myself in a manner worthy of that fine old English gentleman.

As to my grandfather Pepper, who certainly had rather stronger claims upon me than the St. Hughs—for it was to his early care and affection that I was more indebted for my healthy constitution than to any other human being—I must confess that I did not often think of him. The truth is, I had nothing to hope for from him, and Blackmere Castle more frequently intruded itself into my imagination than the roofless old home-
stead in which I first saw the light at Apponagansett. Tenderly as I cherished the image of my poor mother, for I could never think of her without my eyes filling with tears, I endeavoured to divert my thoughts from dwelling upon her. Time had in no degree diminished or rendered indistinct the recollection of her sweet sad face, and to think of her was to call up a palpable and distinct picture of her form as I last saw it, when it lay cold and stiff, and wrapped in the white robe they put upon her when she had ceased to press me to her beating heart. It was only at moments when I was secure from observation that I ever allowed myself to dwell for a moment on this melancholy subject; but now as I walked down Broadway, after I had left Mr. Sloperton's Hotel, I unconsciously fell into a musing humour, and spite of myself and the noise and bustle around me, I could not help dwelling on the early years of my existence, and every event of my boyhood passed through my mind with a strange distinctness, and so impressed me with their vividness that I quite forgot where I was. Again I thought I could hear the sweetly plaintive tones of my mother's voice as she used to bend over me and call me her poor fatherless boy. Tears gushed into my

eyes, and I was blind to every thing about me; but I was soon roused from my dreams and made to feel the painfulness of my actual condition by hearing a voice ejaculate—

“Poor Walter!”

Rubbing my eyes with my pocket-handkerchief, and looking around me for the speaker whose voice I had heard, and which I knew to be Pauline's, I could no where see her. A crowd of ladies were moving along, but I could not recognize among them the form of Pauline. The whole vision of my youthful days was suddenly dissipated, and I was again wide awake to myself; I was no longer an unhappy boy in Apponagansett, but an unhappy man in Broadway without home or employment. But I did not long remember even this, for while I stood looking around me for Pauline, I saw the carriage of Mr. Barton standing in front of a jeweller's, and looking into the store I beheld that gentleman, dressed as usual with exceeding neatness and in the extreme of the fashion, examining some articles of jewellery. Pauline stood beside him, and my blood grew hot and my head began to swim, as I saw him take her hand and hold it in his own, while the jeweller fastened upon her wrist a sparkling bracelet.

Pauline's eyes were not regarding the jewel upon her wrist, nor was she heeding the comments of the Jeweller, nor listening to the remarks of the Banker who seemed to be saying something complimentary to her while he looked at the trinket with his eye glass; but her eyes were turned upon me, her gentle blue eyes that always seemed to beam with love and pity when they looked upon me. Mr. Barton was so occupied by the trinkets which were displayed before him, that he did not discover that I stood before the open door, and that Pauline was earnestly regarding me. I guessed at once the object of their visit to the jeweller, which was to select her bridal ornaments. Pauline's elder sister, Lizzy, was deeply engaged in discussing with another of the assistants in the store the merits of a silver tea-set; her back was turned towards me but I instantly recognized her by her

tall form, and her dark hair which she wore in ringlets down her neck. They were all in high glee, and seemed entirely absorbed in the contemplation of the splendid finery which they were examining, but Pauline, who still kept looking towards me, and gave me a glance of her dear eyes which filled me with rapturous feelings. I was on the point of rushing into the store and clasping her in my arms, which would certainly have been a most ridiculous proceeding, but she seemed to divine my thoughts and shook her head to check me. But I was fast losing all command of myself, and know not what extravagancies I should have committed, had not Lizzy suddenly taken Mr. Barton by the arm and dragged him to the other end of the store where she was examining the silver tea-set. Pauline remained behind, still pretending to be engaged in examining the bracelets, but with her eyes upon me. She looked round upon Mr. Barton and her sister at the opposite end of the store, and taking the bracelet from her wrist returned it to the Jeweler.

Was she going to turn her back upon me, and join my old enemy!

She paused a moment and turned towards me again. Her face was flushed, and she seemed to tremble; I was in a delirium of passion for a moment, but a moment only, for suddenly she moved towards the door, and looking back upon her sister and Mr. Barton, who were still apparently absorbed in the admiration of the tea-set, she ran hastily to me and said in a low hurried voice,

"Go, Walter, go. You distress me by looking in upon me, here. You must forget me hereafter. I shall never forget you, but you must forget me. Good bye, dear Walter; it will only distress us both by your remaining here."

But I could not go, and I made no attempt to move; on the contrary I took her hand, which she withdrew and looking back to her sister and Mr. Barton, said again,

"Go, Walter. They have not seen you and I shall be unhappy if they do. Go, go, dear, go."

But every time she said go, I but felt more inclined to stay, and utterly regardless of her entreaties I again caught her hand and held it so tightly that she did not withdraw it.

"Pauline," said I, "did you not love me once?"

"Yes," she said, blushing and casting down her eyes, "I did, but ———"

"But what, Pauline," I said; "you hesitate; do you hesitate to say you love me no longer?"

"I did not mean to say that, Walter, but ———"

"But you do not love me, I see," I replied, letting go her hand.

"You must go, Walter, if you love me," she said, looking back again.

"I do love you," I said, "and therefore I will not go, Pauline, unless you go with me."

And taking her hand again I drew her from the shop door.

"O, Walter!" she exclaimed, "what are you doing? You are mad. You will cause me a good deal of unhappiness. Go leave me."

"I will never cause my dear Pauline a moment's unhappiness," I replied, and holding her hand firmly in my own, I placed it under my arm, and drew her after me. She did not hold back, but leaned heavily upon me; we glided along the sidewalk rapidly, and I was in so excited a condition that I hardly knew whither I went, nor whether we ran, walked, or flew. It was one of those tumultuously happy moments of my life that never fails to set my blood in a glow whenever I think of it. I was in an ecstasy of delight, and my blood tingled with the sensations of triumph as we hurried along. I kept looking behind me, but saw no one in pursuit, and at the first corner we turned out of Broadway into a less frequented street.

"Is any one coming?" asked Pauline.

"I see no one that you need fear," said I, "darling Pauline."

CHAPTER VI.

Pauline clung close to my side as we hurried on in silence until we had reached a by-street, for we were both too much excited to speak. For my own part, I never before in my life had experienced such a tingling sensation of happiness as I then felt. It would, at any time, have been sufficiently delightful to me to feel the pressure of Pauline's arm upon my own, but to know that I had succeeded in entrapping her from the fold of my arch enemy, Mr. Barton, gave me the most exquisite pleasure. So sudden and unexpected had been our movements that I had not for one moment reflected on what would be the probable result of stealing her away, and was silent, until she looked up in my face, with her bewitching smile, and said :

"Dear Walter, where are we going?"

"I know not," I replied, "but we will not stop until we get to a secure retreat. But do not call me Walter again, love, for you know it is not my name."

"It is the only name by which I know you, and I love to call you Walter," she replied.

"Very well," said I, "let it be so now. But, tell me, Pauline, were you going to desert me?"

"Ask me no more questions," said she, "about that; have I not followed you now? and can you think that I would have deserted you ever, when I follow you now at such risks to myself? No, Walter, I would never have deserted you. When you know all you will not censure me, and, I hope, not love me less, than you did."

I only pressed her dear little hand in reply, for I was too much delighted by her frankness and generosity to make any other answer. I was sure of her now; and on we walked, very rapidly, casting uneasy glances about us, and turning down into the most unfrequented streets, and dreading all the time lest we should encounter a familiar face. But happily we saw no

one who recognized us, and at last, when nearly out of breath, we slackened our pace, hesitated, and stood still. I looked Pauline full in the face, for I had hardly glanced at her before. She at first laughed hysterically, and then burst into tears, and then laughed again. She leaned upon my shoulder, and as I felt her little heart beat violently, I began to fear that she would lose control of her feelings, and that an embarrassing scene might be the consequence in the street.

"Come, Pauline," said I, "let us not stop here; a happy thought strikes me. I know of a home where you will be happy and safe until I can procure a better one for you. I have no money, Pauline, but I can obtain some, and you will have no cause to repent of the step you have taken."

"Repent!" she exclaimed, proudly; "why should I repent? Let us go on. I glory in what I have done; it has saved me from the necessity of repentance hereafter. You have saved me, dear Walter, from a horrid fate, and you shall never again have cause to suspect me of repentance. No, Walter, I have not acted rashly; it was only sudden, not rash. I know what I have done, and am prepared for the consequences. You may take me whither you will and I will follow you."

It occurred to me that as my old friends, the Goodwills, kept a kind of Asylum for all kinds of runaways in distress, that they would willingly receive such a darling fugitive as Pauline, for I had known them to be at great expense and trouble in enabling negro slaves to escape from their owners. Pauline's sweet face, thought I, will surely make as deep an impression upon the kind hearted Quakers as though it were a jet black, and her golden locks will not be less pleasant to their sight than the crisp wool of the African wenches they have so often given a shelter to.— But, even though they should refuse to give Pauline a home, until I could procure one for her, I could not doubt that Sophia Ruby, who was such an ardent worshipper of the beautiful, would be too happy to have in her house such a glorious creature as Pauline, who was certainly infinitely more beautiful than any

of the Dresden China ornaments or French engravings in her cabinets. The love of the beautiful that is satisfied with the imitations of Art is but a sham passion, and I had no doubt of the sincerity of Mrs. Ruby's love for the beautiful, for she made it the prominent topic of her conversation.

As my sole object now was to find a secure retreat for Pauline, until I could make some permanent provision for her, it was no time to be particular, and I resolved to take her first to friend Goodwill's, and if we were rejected there to then appeal to the tender sympathies of Sophia Ruby. I only told Pauline that I was taking her to the house of a friend where she would be kindly received, and that she might feel herself entirely secure, leaving until some other time a full explanation to her of my peculiar position towards my Quaker friends. Pauline was nothing loth to follow me, and having once more become composed and rational, we threaded our way through all the by-streets and lanes until we reached East Broadway, where the Goodwills dwelt. This was happily very far from the house of Pauline's father, and she felt less fear of being pursued, than she did at first. Luckily we found the wife of friend Goodwill at home, and without knowing the cause of my visit she welcomed me heartily and showed as much kindness of feeling for poor Pauline as though she had been a daughter. But Pauline was terribly embarrassed, and when I told Mrs. Goodwill the nature of our relation to each other, and the object we had in view, the dear girl nearly fainted. The kindly manner in which the excellent old lady received her, however, soon reassured her, so that she took off her hat and looked more bright and beautiful than I had ever seen her before, and I could not help feeling very proud for the Goodwills to know that such a lovely creature had deserted her home and friends for my sake.

"Thee is welcome to remain here, friends, as long as thee pleases," said the benevolent old lady, "but we cannot allow thee to occupy one room."

Poor Pauline blushed very red, and I felt not a little confused

at Mrs. Goodwill's blunt remark, which was not intended as a reproof, but was only the result of her cultivating plainness of speech as a religious duty.

I inquired after Desire, but that young lady had gone out on some errand of benevolence in company with Mrs. Ruby, and was not expected back until night. The good old lady retired for a few minutes to prepare some refreshment for us, when I arranged with Pauline that she should remain under the friendly roof of the Goodwills, while I called upon Mr. Bassett to tell him what I had done, and procure some money, for we also resolved to be married at once to prevent the possibility of our separation by any accident that might lead to the discovery of Pauline's retreat.

So, after attempting to partake of Mrs. Goodwill's cakes and sweetmeats, for which neither Pauline nor I had the least appetite, I took a tender farewell of her, and begged Mrs. Goodwill not to allow any body to see the darling girl that I entrusted to her keeping until I returned, and the old lady promised to comply with my request as far as it was consistent with principle.

I had been in such a delirium of excitement ever since I left the Jeweller's shop with Pauline, that I had not stopped to think of the propriety of the act of which I had been guilty, nor of its ultimate results. But on my way to Mr. Bassett's office I had more time for reflection, and I began to think that my conduct would not appear to him in quite so favorable a light as it did to myself. It was clear that Pauline loved me, and that was sufficient excuse for running away with her; it was clear, too, that she did not love Mr. Barton, and that was sufficient reason for preventing the match between them; it was quite clear, too, that in my present circumstances I had no right to entice Pauline from her happy home, for I had no home to take her to in the place of her own. But still I could not persuade myself to relinquish the prize which I had obtained, and I trusted to receive sympathy and money too, from Mr. Bassett; but in these expectations I

was disappointed, for on telling him the particulars of the abduction of Pauline, he not only did not approve of my conduct but lectured me severely for it.

I felt too proud to attempt to justify myself, and told him that I had called to tell him what I had done in accordance with my promise, and that what I wanted of him was assistance, and not advice, and that if he would not give me that which I most needed I would prefer not to receive the other.

"Now, Tom," said he, "I see that you are really in earnest, and therefore you do need my advice for the reason that you do not feel the want of it. There is no act of a man's life, my dear boy, in which he so much requires the advice of his friends, or so little feels the necessity for it, as in his marriage. You are blinded with passion, your blood is inflamed, your head is turned, and you are wholly insensible of the dangers that surround you; I, on the contrary, am cool and unprejudiced, have no feelings to influence me, except a desire to see you happy, and am therefore more likely to judge correctly in this affair than you can be; and now let me tell you, Tom, that if you were not very much blinded indeed by your passions, that your natural keenness of insight into character would enable you to see that Pauline has no real love for you, or at least not the kind of love which is likely to endure and render a man happy."

I was too indignant at the imputation upon Pauline's sincerity to reply to him, and turned to go out of the counting-room, when he put his hand upon my shoulder and told me to stop.

"Why should I stop here longer," I exclaimed in a passion, "to hear you abuse the purest minded and most beautiful creature in the world? No, I will not allow any person to whisper a word against the unsullied purity of Pauline's character."

"I have said nothing against her character," replied Mr. Bassett, smiling; "I merely said that her love for you was not of that kind which is calculated to make a man permanently happy. Consider, Tom, that after having once promised never to desert you, that she was on the point of being married to a man that

she entertained no love for whatever. Does that sound like the act of a woman capable of enduring affection?"

I was startled at this new aspect of the character of Pauline, and replied that, although circumstances might appear against her, yet I was confident of the purity of her mind and the devotedness of her love for me, and that a very satisfactory explanation could be made of her conduct.

"Ah! that may be," replied Mr. Bassett, "but until the explanation shall be made, my dear boy, be careful how you entangle yourself for life. An hour or two of prudent reflection now, may save you from years of wretchedness hereafter. Pauline is a very sweet girl, and I can readily understand the ardor of your feelings towards her; but truly, Tom, I should regard with suspicion a young lady who could so readily desert her natural ties for my sake. Instead of regarding it as a proof of the strength of her love, I should only look upon it as an evidence of the weakness of her principles; for love, Tom, is not a passion, but a principle, and a dutiful and affectionate daughter you may be sure will prove a loving and dutiful wife. You, who so love truth and honesty, or at least profess to do so, could never long retain your love for your wife if you found her lacking in those qualities."

"Of course I could not," said I; "but who will say that Pauline has ever been insincere?"

"As for that," replied Mr. Bassett, "I would not accuse her of duplicity; but it is very clear that she was acting insincerely towards Mr. Barton when she consented to marry him, while her heart was wholly devoted to another, for, of course, Mr. Barton would never have thought of marrying a young lady who frankly told him that she did not love him; and if she did not tell him of the true state of her feelings she was guilty of a very great wrong towards him, one that she could never have atoned for."

I was forced to admit that there was some appearance of reason in what he said, but such was my confidence in the integrity of Pauline's nature and the innocence of her heart, that I was

willing to stake my chance for happiness upon my union with her, and I assured Mr. Bassett that sooner than wound the feelings of Pauline by demanding an explanation of her conduct that I would submit to a life of misery. It was enough for me to know that she had placed her honor and happiness in my keeping, and I would not, like a selfish villain, wound her tender sensibilities, for the sake of satisfying my own scruples.

"I shall deem it but a small matter," said I, "to sacrifice myself, if it be necessary, for the sake of so pure, so sweet and so lovely a creature."

"Very well," said Mr. Bassett, "let the consequences be upon your own head, but remember, rash boy, that I warned you in time."

"No, Sir," I replied proudly, as I turned to go, "I will not remember it; I owe you too much already for past kindness to remember that now you endeavored to destroy the brightest prospect of happiness which I have ever yet been blessed with. I will not remember it if I can help it."

"Poor Tom!" exclaimed Mr. Bassett as I closed the door; but what he said besides I did not hear. In spite of all my boasting I felt a slight pang of jealousy, which was caused by the cool and quiet argument of Mr. Bassett. Pauline had certainly manifested not a little frivolity by her flirting with Mr. Barton, and, as I retraced my steps slowly towards friend Goodwill's again I almost determined to ask her to explain to me her motives in deceiving Mr. Barton.

As I walked dubiously along, pondering on the words of Mr. Bassett, which I could not forget, and doing my best to smother the jealous imp that had got possession of my thoughts, I was suddenly startled by hearing my name spoken, and, looking up, I saw before me Mr. Riquets and his friend Pilfor.

I had been so thoroughly disgusted by the conduct of these pretenders, and had so plainly manifested my contempt for them, that I was indignant at their impudent familiarity in addressing me, and frowned upon the graceless rascals. I will do Mr.

Riquets the credit to say that he blushed when I looked at him, and appeared confused; but Mr. Pilfor, if he had ever possessed any delicacy of feeling, or harbored an idea of personal dignity, had long since outgrown all such things, and cared for nothing but to gain his ends, which were to dress well and live luxuriously. He took no notice whatever of my manner, but addressed me in his bland voice as follows:

"Why, my dear fellow, how remarkably well you are looking. I was saying to Riquets as we came along, our friend Pepper there is one of the most *distingue* looking persons I have seen in Broadway, in many a day."

"And I agreed with him, too," said his companion; "I will go before a commissioner, if you please, and take an oath that I never in my whole life was so impressed with the idea of a perambulating Apollo Belvidere, as when I saw you walking along the two-and-sixpenny side of Broadway. Do, my dear friend, just put yourself in an attitude now as though you were going to slay a python, just to oblige me, and I will do anything in my power to serve you."

"Be so good, then," said I, "as to oblige me by leaving me. I prefer to be alone."

"O, if that's the case," said Pilfor, "I regret extremely, in fact it gives me a good deal of uneasiness to think that we have interrupted you. But we had a proposition to make to you, which it is of some importance you should hear now."

"Let me save you any further trouble," said I; "I have no money that you can rob me of, and cannot serve you at all, neither would I if I could."

"O, you quite misunderstand our motives," said Mr. Riquets; "we had not the least idea of such a thing."

"I am sure I am positively shocked at such an imputation," said Mr. Pilfor; "you evidently have imbibed a prejudice against us, for some very inexplicable reason. Is it not so?"

"It is," said I, "and for no very inexplicable reason either, as you well know."

"Well, I am utterly astonished, I am sure," replied the perplexed-looking Pilfor, "but I cannot help it. The prejudices of some people are really very strange."

"Never mind," said Mr. Riquets, throwing his head back and flourishing his little ebony stick, "you have imbibed a prejudice against your very best friends, now let us go into some fashionable restaurant and imbibe a julep together, after which I think I may venture to presume that the budding thunder gust that seems to be lowering about us will expand into a most deliciously bewitching full blown rainbow of contentment. Come."

"Gentlemen," said I, "you have made a mistake this time; I am out of pocket, and you will not succeed in getting anything out of me. If I go to a restaurant with you, you will have to pay the cost yourselves."

"I really hope, sir, that you do not look upon us in the light of swindlers?" said Mr. Pilfor.

"I must confess to you that I do," said I.

At this Mr. Riquets smiled in a dismal manner, and Mr. Pilfor remarked that there was nothing more common, and, at the same time, more dangerous, than for people to form hasty opinions about strangers.

"Really, gentlemen," I replied, "your attentions, just at this time, annoy me extremely."

"That's very unluckily for you," said Riquets, "for we had a proposition to make to you, which we prefer you should hear now, as we have not the pleasure of knowing where you reside, and may not meet you again. If you are in a hurry we will walk with you, or step with us into a coffee-house and we will discuss the matter over a cup of chocolate or *café au lait*."

"That's a very charming suggestion of yours, and I think I can pledge my honor that our rather eccentric friend will oblige us," said Mr. Pilfor.

Such fellows as Mr. Pilfor, I have always observed, make a great parade about their honor, and are willing to pledge it on the slightest consideration. What motive this precious pair

might have in thus fastening upon me I could not surmise, but I knew they had some sinister end in view, and would, therefore, have left them without hesitation had I not expected they would dodge me and discover the retreat of Pauline. In the hope, therefore, of getting rid of them, I yielded to their request and accompanied them to a coffee-house near by, but not without feeling guilty of dissimulation in hiding my motives. However, my conscience acquitted me of duplicity, for I had told them frankly enough what I thought of them, and how much I desired to be rid of their attentions. But it was always one of my weaknesses to allow knaves to impose upon me. I had a repugnance to wounding the feelings of a rogue, even, and have many a time allowed myself to be cheated rather than let a knave know that I understood his real character. In the case of Riquets and Pilfor, however, I confess that I had no such scruples, for I had discovered that it was no mortification to them to be found out in their knaveries. They were of that numerous class of adventurers who think that to be well dressed is to do well, and who confound shabbiness of apparel with shabbiness of conduct, and who imagine that fine linen and fine feelings are synonymous terms. Mr. Pilfor had an artistic eye for dress, and I cannot deny him the credit of looking like a gentleman everywhere but in his countenance, which no art can prevent from being the symbol of the mind, to those who can read it truly. Mr. Riquets, on the contrary, in spite of his fine dress, had the look of an organ-grinder or an image-vender, and the manner in which he carried his head suggested at once the thought of his having carried a board upon it. Both of these fellows professed a great love for art, and, like Sophia Ruby, were continually talking about the beautiful, but without any of Mrs. Ruby's sincerity or single-heartedness. They professed to an ecstatic veneration for art but had no feeling for nature; they did not, like Mr. Ardent, the painter, love art because she stood for nature, but they mistook the tinsel and trinkets of art for art itself, as they mistook a man's clothes for the man himself. Although bearing no possible re-

semblance to each other externally, there never were two persons of the male sex better matched than were Pilfor and Riquets for being alike base they could feel no shame or degradation in each other's society.

"Come," said I, as we sat down at one of the small marble tables in the coffee-house into which I had permitted myself to be drawn, "come, let me know at once what your business is with me, that I may go."

"O, by all means," said Mr. Pilfor, "we would not be guilty of the rudeness of detaining you against your will for the whole world. Would we, Riquets?"

"I would as soon think of detaining a perfumed zephyr, as his feet tripped over my perspiring brow of a summer afternoon," replied Mr. Riquets. "But, come, let us have our *café au lait* and a cracker."

The coffee and the crackers were brought, and Mr. Riquets, as if to relieve my mind from any uneasiness, paid for them in a very prompt manner.

"The fact is, sir," said Pilfor, "Riquets and myself, and two other literary gentlemen" —

"Why don't you name them at once," said his companion, "and save any further inquiries?"

"Well, I will, but I beg you will remember it is done in confidence," said Mr. Pilfor. I bowed, and he proceeded —

"The two gentlemen, in fact, are both known to you, and are two very remarkable persons: Mr. Jasper Ferocious and Mr. Tibbings. Ferocious is really a man of remarkable genius, and Tibbings is quite a person in his way, although it is rather a small way; but he is such a gentlemanly creature!"

"He is a perfect amenity of literature," observed Mr. Riquets, parenthetically.

"He is quite so, indeed," observed Mr. Pilfor, "and us four will make up a very desirable quartette party, but I have a superstitious veneration for the number five. There is luck in it, and so Riquets and myself have concluded to invite you to join us."

"Join you!" I exclaimed, "and what, pray tell me, shall I join you in?"

"One of the most magnificent enterprizes of the age," said Riquets, "something that will immortalize us all and make us as rich as Rothschild and Astor put together. You will be completely fascinated when you hear the scheme."

"I fear not," I replied, "but let me hear it. I have a scheme of my own on hand which is sufficiently fascinating."

"It is a buttercup to a butternut tree compared with ours," said Riquets, as he jerked his head back as though he had a design of throwing it off his shoulders; "but show him our plan, Pilfor; let it rain its balmy influence upon his soul."

"This is it," said Mr. Pilfor, "as he drew himself out and seemed to elongate like an opera glass; it is one of the most capital things that was ever conceived for making a fortune and achieving a most desirable reputation:"

"But what is it to me?" said I impatiently, for I was fearful that something might befall Pauline if I prolonged my absence.

"You shall see all in good time, sir," replied Pilfor, with an important flourish of his hand. "This is our scheme."

"Look out now for rainbows and aurora borealis," exclaimed Mr. Riquets; "you will be perfectly entranced and taken off your feet."

"We propose" continued Mr. Pilfor drawing a paper from his pocket, "to establish a new and brilliant paper in this city to be called the Quizzing Glass."

"Isn't the idea a most felicitously enchanting one!" exclaimed his companion.

"The object we have in view is to shoot folly on the wing, to satirize vice, to hold up to public scorn the follies and fashions of the age, to furnish a perfect magazine of refined wit, genial humor and trenchant criticism, and to preserve, withal, a high moral tone, and teach the world important lessons in good behavior," said Mr. Pilfor, or rather read from the paper he held in his hand.

"Isn't it a perfectly brilliant undertaking?" said Riquets.

"Perfectly so, it strikes me," I said, "but most brilliantly ridiculous for you. Pray do you intend to do this by yourselves."

"O, no, by no means," said Mr. Pilfor, "we have already engaged the services of Mr. Ferocious, a most remarkable person and Mr. Tibbings who has got money; and will lend us the use of his name as we have told you already."

"Well, I have listened to your plans, but as I do not see that they are of any consequence to me," I replied, "I shall not stop to hear anything further."

"Stop one minute, if you please," exclaimed Mr. Riquets as both he and his companion caught hold of my arm. "Stop one moment my dear fellow, you are such an original genius that really we would be most happy to have you join us in our enterprise."

"Not, I," I replied, "let me go I desire no connexion with you."

"O, then, we have another very liberal proposition to make to you. We will give you a share of the profits in our paper, if you choose to become a part proprietor. We will not require any money from you, but will take your note of hand for your share of the capital."

I could not exactly comprehend the designs of these rascals in making this attack upon me, but I was well assured they had some sinister motive which they endeavored to cover up by their absurd proposals. Their nefarious plans leaked out a few days afterwards, but at the time I was at a loss to conceive of their motives. I had become too impatient to return to my darling Pauline to waste more time on them and in spite of their efforts to detain me, I broke away from them and again found myself in the street. My first impulse was to run with all my might towards friend Goodwill's, but fear of being watched compelled me to a more moderate and prudent course.

So, avoiding the public streets, I made my way cautiously

through the by-ways of the city, until I reached Friend Goodwill's house, where I found things in a very different position from what I had left them. The whole family was in a ferment, and my darling Pauline was in tears, and on the verge of hysterics. The cause of this new difficulty proceeded from a quarter where I had least anticipated any embarrassment. During my absence from the Goodwill's, the hitherto gentle and loving Desire had returned, and on being introduced to Pauline, and informed of the reason of her being there, that modest young lady had become dreadfully excited, and insisted on Pauline's being turned out of doors before I returned. But the good old lady would not countenance such a ruthless and unfeeling proposition on the part of her daughter. Notwithstanding that Desire had on all occasions shown so great a liking for me, she now refused to speak to me, and exhibited a degree of passion that quite confounded me. As soon as I entered the room, Pauline flew into my arms, and entreated me to remain in the house no longer, and expressed as much abhorrence for Desire as that young friend had for herself. I was shocked beyond expression to find how unfortunately things had gone at the Goodwill's, and was grievously disappointed at the reception of Pauline by the hitherto affectionate and gentle Desire. But there was no other course for me than to leave the house with Pauline, which I instantly did, accompanied by the parting blessing of Mrs. Goodwill and the frowns of her daughter.

"It is very odd, dear Pauline," said I, "that Desire Goodwill, who appeared so partial to me before, should suddenly express such a dislike for me now."

"Dear, dear Walter," replied Pauline, clinging to my side, "what an innocent you are. It was not you that she disliked, but me for being loved by you. O, dear Walter, promise me that you will never see her again. She is a wicked creature."

I promised that I would not.

"And now, Pauline, let us go to Sophia Ruby's; she is a true friend to the unfortunate, and such a worshipper of the beautiful,

that she will be proud to have you in her keeping; she has always some fugitive or other under her care, and is never so unhappy as when not contributing to the happiness of others. If she was not such a lover of the True as well as the Beautiful, and whatever is true, I believe, she esteems as beautiful, I should think that my candor had sometimes offended her."

"Is she beautiful?" asked Pauline.

"Not so beautiful as you are, Pauline," I replied; "but it is no fault of hers, for she tries to make herself so that she may afford pleasure to others."

"How amiable it is in her, I am sure I shall love her," replied Pauline.

There was such a sweet sincerity in Pauline's manner, that as soon as I saw her I forgot all the jealous feelings which had been awakened by the remarks of Mr. Bassett, and I no longer entertained the least doubt of her devotion to me. So entirely free from anything like the calculating prudence of some young ladies was Pauline, that when I told her of my unsuccessful application for money to Mr. Bassett, she seemed to cling to me more fondly than ever. Our walk to Mrs. Ruby's house was but a short one, yet short as it was, it was long enough to give me renewed confidence in Pauline, and, if possible, to increase my love for that entrancing creature. The unexpected termination of our visit to the Goodwills had rather shaken my confidence in meeting a kind reception at Mrs. Ruby's, but that philanthropic soul received us as warmly and commended us for our courage as heartily as though we had been her own children.

"You have done perfectly right," said Mrs. Ruby to Pauline, "in consulting your own affections rather than the will of your parents or the custom of society. If your parents really love you, they will approve whatever gives you the most pleasure, but if they are so very unnatural as to wish you to marry to please them rather than yourself, I do not think they are entitled to obedience from you; as for society I do not think its laws are entitled to the consideration of an independent mind; for my own

part, I have long since turned my back upon it, and owe it nothing. The true law of life is enjoyment; whatever adds to your happiness is lawful, and the only sin is the infliction of misery. Suffering is such a discord in the harmony of nature that I do not think it has any right to be in the world, and that therefore everybody is bound to do something towards extinguishing it by cultivating the true and the beautiful. Everybody cannot be beautiful, but everybody can be true, and truth and beauty are more nearly akin than perhaps you are willing to believe."

Pauline was charmed with the philosophy of Mrs. Ruby, it was so unlike the asceticism which had been always preached to her by her parents, who regarded all enjoyments as sinful, and as religiously believed in the necessity of cultivating crosses and hardships, as Mrs. Ruby did in the opposite doctrine. This philosophical philanthropist was dressed with uncommon gaiety, and her hair had been cultivated to that extreme of beauty that it had become a bright purple. She had received us in a lower room, but after we had explained the cause of our visit, she invited us to walk up into her boudoir, where, to use her own language, we should meet one of the truest loves of harmony, a purely intellectual nature, whose daily food was music, and whose spirit was like an infinite circle, it was so comprehensive and embracing. Pauline, as well as myself, would have preferred not to see Mrs. Ruby's intellectual friend, and so we told her, but as she insisted, and we had thrown ourselves upon her protection, we had to yield to her desires; and on stepping into her boudoir were equally astonished and vexed to find in the remarkable gentleman, no greater person than Professor Sprads. No sooner did the ardent Professor catch a glimpse of me than he ran and embraced me with a great show of enthusiasm, and Mrs. Ruby's benevolent countenance fairly beamed with delight. Poor Pauline was so much astonished and frightened at finding a person to whom she was known that she nearly fainted.

"So then you know them, Professor?" said Mrs. Ruby.

"Know them!" exclaimed the Professor in an ecstasy; "O, no! of course, not. I rather should venture upon the assertion that I didn't know anybody else; excepting, of course," bowing gallantly to Mrs. Ruby, "our distinguished friend, whom not to know is to be worse than unknown."

"How delightful these accidental re-unions of old friends are," said Mrs. Ruby, "and how many such will there not be in the infinite future."

"Admirable idea! Magnificent! superb! delicious thought! How delighted Madame Sprads would be to listen to such gushings of a poetical soul! So perfectly delicious in feeling, so superb in conception, so beautifully, admirably expressed!" exclaimed the Professor, clasping his hands together, and casting his eyes up imploringly to the ceiling.

"Isn't he a most remarkable creature?" whispered Mrs. Ruby; "he has such sympathies with the true and the beautiful."

"Ah! you should see the pleasure of Madame Sprads in listening to poetry like that. I do actually, positively, and decidedly believe that it would excite her to that degree that she could not contain herself. I do actually believe it," said the Professor; "I have often remarked to her that my divine and most charming friend would really prove too much for her nerves, she is such an extraordinarily sensitive creature; so much soul!"

"I am such an enthusiast in music," said Mrs. Ruby, "that I love everybody who helps to produce harmony in the world, because I feel that it is by harmonious circles rising one above another that the divine truths of the universe are sustained."

"What a deliciously profound thought!" exclaimed Professor Sprads; "upon my word, Mr. Pepper, I would give any amount of money if Madame Sprads could have heard that delicious remark."

As I had told Mrs. Ruby our exact situation, how I had run off with Pauline, and wished to find her a shelter where she

would be safe from the pursuit of her father, until I could find employment which would enable me to provide a suitable home for her, and had also explained to Mrs. Ruby my own penniless condition, it would be in the last degree ungrateful and base if I did not here acknowledge the generosity of her conduct, and confess myself indebted to her for her unselfish liberality towards Pauline and me. So far from our necessities or improvidences affecting in the least degree her conduct, or causing her to regard us with coolness or suspicion, she seemed to feel more kindly disposed and more earnest in her desire to make us feel entirely at home in her house. But Mrs. Ruby was a remarkable exception to the rest of the world, she felt no particular sympathy for those who were well provided for, and basking in the sunshine of fortune, unless they happened to be of a musical turn, but the afflicted of all degrees and colors, were sure to find in her a sympathizer; the greatest sinners, however, came in for the largest share of her sympathy, and those who were most indifferent about themselves, found in her the most abiding friend. It was enough for her to know that assistance was needed, without inquiring into the cause, and if she could not afford the required aid from her own income, she always sought for it among those who had the means, and knew her character well enough to trust in her dispensing their charity properly. Professor Sprads had called upon her to solicit her aid in bringing before the public by the means of those preliminary notices of the Press, without which no new scheme can ever be successful in an age like ours, which takes its form and pressure wholly from the newspapers; and he had just finished his exposition of his plan as we entered. Mrs. Ruby, it appeared had entered zealously into the Professor's views, and promised him all the aid her pen could render him. Thinking that we might be of service to the Professor and the Professor to us, and that by forming a league with him we might safely marry, and so get up a very pretty little romance; and next to getting some poor wretch released from prison, or rescuing a frail sister from her abandoned course of

life, there was nothing that gave Mrs. Ruby so much satisfaction, as promoting a run-a-way match. In doing so she only thought of the pleasure of the runaways, and the tyranny of the parents, and never of the misfortunes that might grow out of the marriage to any of the parties interested. She was an optimist to the extent of believing that every thing should be all right and pleasant in the world; and so much opposed was she to suffering of all kind, that she was puzzled to account for such a manifest mistake in nature as a discord. All things, she insisted, ought to be in harmony, and she was almost vexed that they were not.

"Your coming here this afternoon," said Mrs. Ruby, turning to me, "is really providential. Professor Sprads has just been telling me of a project which you and Pauline can join in, and it will be to your advantage, and give you both a very delightful position. You would not object to our young friends joining in your enterprise, Professor."

Here the Professor clapped his hands together, and gave another imploring look at the ceiling, as though the bare mention of such a thing had deprived him of speech.

"It isn't just the thing of all others which I should desire most," said the Professor. "Of course, not; O, no!"

"He is such an enthusiastic creature," said Mrs. Ruby.

"And Madam Sprads wouldn't be delighted; of course, not," continued the Professor, "and it isn't perfectly delicious; by no means. I am enraptured at the thought. What a splendid connection it will be for them. And such mints of money!"

"Pray, what is this scheme?" said I, "which is to produce such mints of money, and work such wonders?"

"The Professor," said Mrs. Ruby, "is about to get up a family, and he wants two such young persons as you and Pauline to assist him, and really I think you may be of great service to him."

"Isn't it exquisite! Perfectly delicious!" said the Professor, grasping my hand and shaking it vehemently.

"A family!" said I, quite at a loss to conceive his meaning.

"O, no! of course, not. Not a family, but *the* Sprads family. Delicious, isn't it?"

"Really I am at a loss to conceive how I can aid you in such an attempt," said I, still more embarrassed.

"Such delicious innocence!" exclaimed the Professor, "it is positively refreshing. Quite so. Madam Sprads will certainly die when I tell her. I shall lose that most estimable woman I know. Exquisite!"

"Be so good," said I, as to explain your scheme.

"My scheme is simply this, and you will not approve of it, of course, certainly not," said the Professor, with an ironical wink, "such a perfectly delicious scheme nobody would approve who happened to be in want of money and a splendid connection.

"I propose, sir, to get up a Sprads family," said the Professor, grandly, "for the purpose of giving concerts. Don't you think it a perfectly magnificent idea? The Sprads family! Madame Sprads has the most delicious soprano; she is to be the sister and the prima donna assoluta of the family. If a more superb voice than Madame Sprads's was ever heard in the San Carlos Opera House, I should like to know whose it was, that's all. I am to be the elder brother and the basso; and you and Miss Pauline shall be the young brother and sister; I have already engaged a third brother, who is to be the buffo of the family; he is a little old, but he can be trimmed up very well, and with some new teeth and a gentleman's real head of hair, he will pass off by gas light for as young a man as myself."

"But, Professor," said I, "do you really make such a proposition to me in seriousness?"

"I never was more serious in my life, sir," replied he, with a flourish; "why shouldn't I be? Think of the sensation we shall create. Large bills posted all about the streets with THE SPRADS FAMILY in immense capitals; then there will be the notices in the papers; bouquets thrown on the stage whenever we appear; all our portraits beautifully lithographed and placed

in the windows of the music stores; then there will be the Sprads Soirees, the Sprads Polkas, the Sprads quadrilles, the Sprads hats, the Sprads everything. O, it will be perfectly delicious! heavenly! superb! Why shouldn't I be serious?"

"But, as charming as it appears to you, Professor, it strikes me very differently; for I could not consent to deceive the public by passing myself off as your brother, even though I had no objections of a more serious nature to assuming the name of Sprads," said I.

"What, not when you could make such a perfectly splendid connection by doing so?" asked the Professor with unfeigned astonishment.

"The Professor's love of art is so strong," said Mrs. Ruby, "and his soul is so wrapped up in music that he has no opportunity to cultivate a love of truth, which is a passion by itself.—But from my own stand-point of observation I can appreciate and reverence the worship for the beautiful which I discover in both of you."

"What a magnificent conception!" exclaimed the Professor again; "if Madam Sprads could have heard that brilliant remark I don't positively think she could ever have survived it."

"If you will allow me," said Mrs. Ruby, "I think I can suggest a plan that will meet the objection of Mr. Pepper and also serve the purposes of the Professor."

"Of course," replied Professor Sprads, smiling and bowing; "Of course she can. That remarkable woman, as I have often said to Madame Sprads, in the sanctuary of our fire-side, can do any thing. She is a perfect Crichton, only she is more admirable, every way. Listen to her:" and the Professor looked knowingly at me.

"Since you have scruples about assuming the name of Sprads," said Mrs. Ruby to me, and your love of the Beautiful and the True will not permit you to call yourself by any other name than that of Pepper, why not call the association the Pepper

Family?" "Never! Never?" cried the Professor, leaping from his seat; "What, Madam Sprads give up her splendid reputation, and be called Madam Pepper! And I Professor Pepper! O, its deliciously absurd! The Pepper family! O, its delightful."

"But its idle to dispute about the matter," said I, "for I cannot sing; and as for Pauline, she must not appear in public. There are other means of procuring a subsistence than by singing; so you must not count upon the assistance of Pauline and I in getting up a family, Professor."

Pauline had sat during the whole of this ridiculous discussion, with her veil closely drawn, and apparently agitated, but whether by mirth or grief I did not know.

"Very well," said the Professor, very well; "there are whole armies of eligible ladies and gentlemen who will be most happy to join us; and such a splendid soprano as Madam Sprads can have no difficulty in getting up a most attractive family. Then don't throw away a most superb chance for a splendid connection. O, no, of course not. That's all."

And having thus delivered his sentiments, the Professor grandly withdrew, for there was an air of grandeur in everything that the little man did.

"Professor Sprads is a man of genius, I know," said Mrs. Ruby, "but he has his peculiarities, as all men of genius have."

"Yes, he is certainly a very singular person," said I, "but his genius all seems to lie in the inordinate estimate which he places upon the powers of that remarkable woman, Madame Sprads, as a delicious soprano."

"He reminds me of Beethoven in his impetuosity," said Mrs. Ruby, "and I certainly do not esteem him the less for having a good opinion of his wife, who is a most remarkable woman; at least I think she must be a remarkable woman who could inspire him with such a profound regard for her genius. But, perhaps this is an unpleasant subject to you, and you would prefer talking about your own affairs."

"I would, indeed," I replied, "for it is time that we resolved what to do."

"You of course love each other," said Mrs. Ruby, glancing toward Pauline, who blushed a deep scarlet.

"Of course we do," I replied. And you are willing to make any sacrifices for the sake of each other," continued Mrs. Ruby.

"Yes, sweetly whispered Pauline, as she looked tenderly in my face.

"Yes," I replied, we would undergo any labor, or endure any hardship, if we might but live with each other."

"Then why not be married now?" said Mrs. Ruby, "you will certainly not increase your hardships by being married, and the enjoyment of each other's society will be a solace to you in your troubles.

This was so much in accordance with our own way of viewing the matter that we agreed entirely with Mrs. Ruby, and assured her that we were not only quite willing to be married, but that we most ardently desired the consummation of our vows; the only bar to our doing so being the want of a home.

"That shall be no hindrance," replied Mrs. Ruby; "you shall have a home here until you are able to provide one for yourself. My style of living is plain; but, such as it is, you shall be heartily welcome."

Pauline was so overcome by the goodness of this generous-hearted woman that she threw her arms about her neck and kissed her. As for myself, I was quite wild with joy, and proposed going for a clergyman immediately. Mrs. Ruby and Pauline both seconded the resolution, and without waiting for any further discussion, I took my hat and was just leaving the house to go in pursuit of a clergyman, when Pauline called me back, and whispering in my ear that a plain gold ring would be necessary, she slipped her purse into my hand, and giving me a gentle push, closed the door upon me, or I know not what I might have done. As Pauline had gone out on a shopping expedition, her purse was well filled; but I would have died

sooner than have used a shilling that it contained. I put the precious treasure in my pocket, and set off in pursuit of a clergyman, and fortunately found one in the next street, who promised me that he would go directly to the house of Mrs. Ruby, as soon as he could put on his gown, and would wait for my return. There being no jeweller's shop in the neighborhood, I was obliged to go further to purchase a ring. I had proceeded but a short distance from the clergyman's house, when, as I was turning the corner of the street, I saw on the opposite side old Gil and Mr. Barton, followed by two men who had the appearance of police officers. My first impulse was to turn and run but as that would be showing a want of candor, and might justly subject me to the charge of deception, I walked boldly towards them. As soon as old Gil and Mr. Barton perceived me they ran across the street, and calling to the two men behind them to follow them, cried out—"Here's the villain; seize him before he escapes." The two officers directly laid hold of my collar, and as I had shown them that I was not disposed to run from them, I felt under no necessity of submitting to such an indignity, and I saluted each of them with a blow in the face, and told them to take their hands off. But they kept a strong hold of me, and were ordered by Mr. Bassett not to let me escape.

"Escape!" I exclaimed, "from what, or whom, should I escape? What is the meaning of this attack upon me?"

"The meaning of it is that you are a villain," said Mr. Barton, "and you are going to be punished for your villainies."

"Where is my daughter?" said Old Gil, whom you have enticed away from me, to repay me for the kindness I showed you, and for taking you into my house when you were starving, you vagabond."

"Your daughter is safe," I said, "and where she prefers living to being forced to marry a man she despises."

"Gag the rascal!" exclaimed Mr. Barton; "search his pockets officers, he may have some deadly weapons concealed about him."

"I will save them the trouble," said I, taking from my pockets their contents, among which was Pauline's purse.

"The villain has robbed my daughter of her purse," said old Gil, as he caught sight of that precious article.

"Ah! that's enough to convict him," said Mr. Barton, "the rascal! Not content with obtaining the poor child, he must pick her pockets. What an atrocious villain he is. Officers keep a good hold of him."

Such vile accusations as these made my blood boil, and, in my anger I struggled hard to escape from the grip of the mercenary wretches who had seized me; not that I would have run from old Gil, or the hypocritical financier, Mr. Barton, but that I might get hold of the specious rogue, and repay his insolence. But they were too powerful for me, and my rage almost paralyzed me. To be accused of robbing my dear Pauline, for whom I would have gladly sacrificed my life, was so vile a charge that I could not submit to it, and, if I had been free, I would have made the bank President repent his insolence towards me. Old Gil I could pardon, for Pauline was his favorite daughter, and anything that he might accuse me of I could attribute to his grief at her loss, but the cool and wily Mr. Barton, I did not believe had any love for Pauline, although he was so anxious to marry her, and I could only attribute his vile charge to a malignant spite against me as his rival.

"Tell me what you have done with my daughter?" said old Gil, "and you shall go free. I will not prosecute you even for robbing her, or for your crime in abducting her. All that I want is my child. I have no revengeful feelings against you, notwithstanding your shameful abuse of my confidence."

"Be careful how you promise," said Mr. Barton, "the villain must be punished; he must be put out of the way of doing any more harm. If you are willing to forgive him I am not. It is time he was under the charge of the State. Look out for him officer; if you allow him to escape, I shall hold you responsible."

"As for you," said I to Mr. Barton, giving him as con-

temptuous a look as I could, "I despise you too much to make any explanation to you. But to the father of Pauline I owe an apology for my conduct, and I love her too sincerely not to respect her father."

"Don't let him blarney you," said Mr. Barton; "you know what a romancer he is."

"I don't fear his blarney," said old Gil; "he knows me too well to think that I can be influenced by it. Tell me, Walter, what you have done with Pauline; my heart aches for the misguided child. It is you that has enticed her from her home and her duty."

"Pauline is well and safe," said I; "no harm can befall her while she remains in the asylum to which she voluntarily followed me. I have put no constraint upon her, and if she wishes to return home I shall not oppose it. But I will not reveal the secret of her retreat, unless you promise that she shall not be annoyed by the addresses of a man whom she despises."

"Make the rascal no promises," said Mr. Barton, "there will be no difficulty in finding Pauline, the villain has taken her to one of his infamous haunts. Hold him hard officers, unless you wish to lose your reward. Trust to me for finding Pauline."

"You have not been married, Pepper?" said old Gil.

"No," said I.

"Thank Heaven!" exclaimed the old man.

"Don't believe him," said Mr. Barton, "I'll warrant he has done more than that."

CHAPTER VII.

THE result of my capture by the father of Pauline and her intended husband, the bank president, was a night's confinement in the city prison on a charge of abducting the young lady and robbing her of her purse, which the inexorable officer of the law deprived me of. Being in great distress on account of Pauline,

and knowing that her tender heart would be pierced with fears for my safety, and fearing, myself, that she might suspect me of deserting her intentionally, I wrote a note explaining to her the cause of my absence, and beseeching her to remain quietly under the protection of Mrs. Ruby until I could procure bail, and be set at liberty once more. I hired one of the turnkeys of the prison to deliver the letter, but the treacherous knave, instead of conveying it to Mrs. Ruby's, immediately carried it to old Gill, who thereby discovered Pauline's retreat, and having secured the darling girl, he caused me to be set at liberty the next morning. Not knowing what had happened, immediately on regaining my freedom, I hastened to Mrs. Ruby's and was made acquainted with the fact of Pauline's being carried off by her father. I knew it would be useless to attempt to regain access to Pauline, and had no doubt that she would be compelled to marry Mr. Barton, for I could not but acknowledge to myself that Pauline, although I had no doubt of her love for me, was easily persuaded by those who had any claim upon her affections.

I was foiled in my matrimonial attempts, and now that Pauline had been removed from my sight my passions were cooled, and I saw that I had been on the point of committing a very great folly, for it would have been wretchedly thoughtless to involve a generous and confiding girl in my own embarrassments and miseries, resulting from my want of reliable means of support. And I could not but wonder that so well meaning a person as Mrs. Ruby should have encouraged us in our inconsiderate designs. But that tender hearted philanthropist so delighted in seeing other people happy that she never looked beyond the immediate effects of her measures and schemes. She was a mere child in her feelings, and played with human beings as though they were toys, caring nothing more about them than for the gratification which their oddities or pleasures afforded her fancy. It was a pleasing sight to her to see two ardent and thoughtless young persons, like Pauline and I, made happy by being married, and therefore she encouraged our thoughtless folly, without reflecting

on the ultimate misery of such an act to ourselves and our friends.

It was because wickedness was so very disagreeable to her, that Mrs. Ruby was so great a reformer, for it annoyed her by its hideousness, rather than outraged her sense of justice. The beautiful was never wicked in her eyes, and an agreeable sinner had, for her, all the excellencies of a saint. She talked a good deal about the inner life, but she was mostly affected by the outward shows of things; and whatever seemed fair, was, to her, fair. Although I readily discovered the true character of Mrs. Ruby, and saw that she loved the beautiful on account of its agreeableness, and not because it was true, as was plainly enough shown by the arts which she employed in the embellishment of her own person; yet I felt flattered by her evident partiality for me, and loved her because she seemed to take so much interest in my welfare. In relating to me the particulars of Pauline's meeting with her father, she seemed to regard the whole affair as a little romantic entertainment which had been got up expressly for her pleasure; and my own vexation seemed to afford her as much gratification as any part of the little drama.

Dear, sensuous Mrs. Ruby, what a charmed life she led, in her little sanctuary, surrounded by singing birds, and flowers, and German engravings of celestial ladies, with eyes upturned, and their fingers engaged in sweeping over the strings of a harp, instead of sweeping with a broom. Although there were not many such persons as Mrs. Ruby in the world, yet there were a good many who had a reverence for her, and regarded her as another Saint Celia. Music being the most sensuous of the fine arts, and making its appeals solely to the feelings, while it leaves the reason unmoved, it was the favorite passion of Mrs. Ruby, who loved the excitement which it caused in her feelings, and saved her the trouble of thinking. All musicians, therefore, were most kindly entertained by Mrs. Ruby, and some of them, like Professor Sprads, made use of her generous nature for the purpose of furthering their own designs. But Mrs. Ruby, with all her weaknesses, was a true woman, and a

genuine philanthropist, for even though some of her acts were not dictated by a far-reaching wisdom, yet they were all calculated to render somebody happy; there was no ill-nature in her making, nor anything of that satanic disposition, which gives so keen a perception of the foibles and imperfections of other people as to render its possessor continually unhappy, and disagreeable to others. No, Mrs. Ruby imparted cheerfulness to others by her own cheerful and summery feelings; and in spite of my disappointments and chagrins I left her feeling tolerably well content with myself. But once out of the warm atmosphere of her presence, I was again chilled to the heart by reflecting on my perfectly destitute and wretched condition, and resolved once more to make a character and position for myself in the world or die in the attempt.

It is very easy to resolve to do great things, but performance is another matter; and a youth with a bad character, without money, and with but one friend, in a great city, is in a most hopeless condition to achieve greatness, or even gain money. As I had made my own character by my unfortunate mistake in supposing that a falsehood could be made to answer the purposes of truth, I had no one to blame for my mishaps but myself; but I could not help murmuring that since I had made so many sacrifices to preserve my integrity, and had done so much to establish a character for sincerity and truthfulness, that so many accidents had thwarted my intentions.

I had no other resource now than my unwavering friend, Mr. Bassett, who had been my good angel from the beginning, and preserved me many times from ruin. So, on leaving Mrs. Ruby's house, I proceeded directly to Mr. Bassett's counting-room, and was received by that excellent man with the same appearance of cordiality and kind-heartedness that he had always manifested towards me.

"Well, Tom," said he as I was about to speak, "so, you have been again in difficulty."

"Alas, sir," I replied, "I fear I shall never again be free

from it. I must seek my fortune in another country where my name is unknown, and the past acts of my life will not be stumbling blocks in my way."

"Poor Tom!" said Mr. Bassett, "you have had a troublesome time of it since you took upon yourself the responsibility of your conduct. But do not be discouraged. What do you need most to enable you to accomplish your designs?"

"Money! money!" I exclaimed in a frenzy; "I can do nothing without money. No one will believe the word of a pauper; there is an impression, I find, that truth must have a property basis. The same people who respected me when I had money now laugh at me when they find I have nothing in my pocket."

"I am glad you are coming to your senses," said Mr. Bassett, patting me on the shoulder; "you would refuse my offers of assistance, and thought you could make yourself famous for truth without a dollar in your pocket; and you might have succeeded, Tom, if you had persevered, and chosen to live poor and neglected, that you might be well spoken of after you were dead; for the acts of men are judged of without any reference to their wealth after they leave the world. But that is a costly way of procuring a reputation, for you have to sacrifice everything to obtain it, which is worth possessing. Let people say what they will, Tom, about Fame, it is a frivolous thing to live for; it is something that cannot be enjoyed, and is well called by the Poet, the last infirmity of noble minds. I believe I have quoted the expression correctly, but the sentiment is a just one. The most famous men have cared least about fame, and never knew that they were well known."

"It is not fame that I desire," I replied, "but an honorable reputation, that I may prove myself worthy of the name of my father."

"It is an honorable ambition, Tom," said Mr. Bassett, "and I applaud your motives. Try to behave so that I may applaud your conduct. You have tried the purifying influence of poverty, and now you should try the opposite course. Wealth has

greater temptations than want, and since you have said you want money, you shall have it."

"I did not come here to beg," said I.

"I know you did not, and I am not going to treat you as a beggar," said he, "but as a friend. You want money; well, why should I not supply your want? but, you want a character, too; that I cannot supply. If character must have a property basis, as you think, you shall have the basis to begin with, and we will see what kind of a structure you rear upon it, and whether you will prove yourself worthy to bear the name of St. Hugh, if your father should ever be restored to you."

Mr. Bassett then opened his check book, and reached me a draft on the bank of which Mr. Barton was president, for ten thousand dollars. I was surprised at the sum, and refused to accept it. But Mr. Bassett compelled me to take it by assuring me that if I did not he should construe my refusal into an act of unkindness to himself. He would listen to no refusal, and insisted that I should take it without making any other promise than that I would call upon him for more when it should be all spent. He also released me from the obligation which he had before imposed upon me of informing him of every new undertaking which I might engage in, and told me I was free to act as I liked, to go where I pleased and come when I pleased. I was so deeply affected by this generous conduct on the part of Mr. Bassett, and so puzzled by the strangeness of his conduct, that I knew not what to say. But I took the draft, and left the counting room of my benefactor, almost bewildered by the apparently good fortune which had befallen me. Mr. Bassett really seemed to take delight in conferring benefits upon me, and, as I took my leave of him, he shook my hand so cordially, and appeared to enjoy my surprise so much that I could not help feeling that I had been conferring a benefit upon him in accepting his liberal gift.

But, what was I to do with this large sum of money, which had been so suddenly put in my possession? A suspicion crossed my

mind that it had been given to test my character; but why should Mr. Bassett wish to indulge in so costly an experiment. He professed to have already entire confidence in my integrity, and he could hope for no personal advantage to himself from my future course of life. I was puzzled to fathom his motives; but the money was in my possession, and my first impulse was to make a display of it. So, having drawn the amount from the Bank, I called upon old Gil, whom I found sitting at his tattered old desk precisely as I had first seen him, with a heap of papers before him, and his person bearing the same marks of carelessness. He looked up in my face, as I entered his dingy little office, inquiringly, but he said nothing.

"I have called upon you for assistance," said I, as he seemed to be waiting for an explanation of my visit.

"Assistance!" he exclaimed, "assistance! What to enable you to run off with my daughter again?"

"Nothing of the kind," I replied; "the assistance I want is not money."

"I am glad of it," he said, surlily, "for you would not get it."

"I supposed as much," I said, "I knew that you were always ready to receive money, and as I have got some to invest, I want your advice in the matter."

"Don't think to deceive me by any of your romances, Pepper," said he, turning to his desk again. "I know you too well. But how much money have you to invest, a quarter dollar?"

"I have ten thousand dollars," I replied, taking the roll of bills from my pocket, "and would be glad to have the benefit of your advice in investing it safely."

"Poo! poo!" said old Gil, "why do you come here to annoy me with such stories. You can get nothing out of me by such conduct. You cannot impose upon me. I know you, Pepper."

"You do not know me," I replied; "is there any deception in these bills; look at them; are they not genuine?" And I threw them upon the desk of the old man, who started as he turned them over, and summed up the value.

"They are all genuine," said he; "but how did you obtain them?"

"Honestly," I replied; "and I mean to use them honorably. Will you keep them for me, until I can determine in what manner to use them?"

Old Gil's countenance brightened up as he spoke, and he said:

"Certainly, Pepper, I will take care of the money for you.

"I never refuse money, Pepper," continued old Gil, as he counted the notes which I handed him, and scrutinized them closely, examining the texture of the paper, and looking at every one separately by holding it up to the light. "I never refuse money on deposit, because I can always operate with it to good advantage. But, you are sure, Pepper, that there is no mistake about the bills?"

"I hope you do not doubt my word," said I, looking at him indignantly; "for if you do——"

"O, no, not exactly that, Pepper," said he, putting the bills into his desk and locking it; "but——"

"Give me back my money," said I, "if you have any doubts of my honesty."

"O, no, nothing of that sort," replied old Gil, "I can say with truth, Pepper, that you never robbed me of anything, except my daughter, and I believe you to be honest in money matters."

"But you think me like a good many of your Wall street friends, perhaps, honest in money matters, but dishonest in everything else. Is not that what you were going to say?" said I.

"Pepper, you have a very loose way of thinking about some things, and I am afraid you have not had good religious instruction. You deceived me once, you know, but I will overlook the past; perhaps you will do better hereafter."

"I have done better," said I.

"Well, you have done pretty well to get so much money," said he; "it is none of my business how you came by it, but I hope, I mean I presume, you got it fairly and honestly. I will

operate with it and give you half the profits; money is tight, and I can buy some good paper at a large discount."

"I will take nothing but legal interest," said I; "I will not be a party to any schemes for robbing people by taking advantage of their necessities."

"Poh! poh!" exclaimed old Gil, "and yet you robbed me of my daughter. You talk about robbing! Do you think money is more valuable than a man's child?"

"If I do not," said I, "it appears that you do."

"I?" exclaimed the old fellow, scowling at me; "what do you mean by that, sir; have I stolen anybody's child?"

"Not that I know of," I replied, "but you did worse, in bartering your child for money."

The old fellow blushed a deep scarlet as I spoke, and the tobacco juice dripped from each corner of his half-open mouth, upon the corners of his dingy white cravat. At last he recovered himself, and exclaimed with passion, "it is false, it is no such thing. I never bartered away my child for money. If you mean Pauline, she never told you that I wished her to marry Mr. Barton."

"She never did tell me so, it is true," I replied; "but she understood your wishes, and was willing to sacrifice her own happiness to please you."

"I have no objection to your thinking so," replied old Gil; "my daughter is more dear to me than she can ever be to you; let her do what she will, Pepper, she could never loosen the chords which bind her to her father's heart. Ah! you think you love her, perhaps, and you may love her with the selfish feeling of a man for his mistress. But you would not love her with undiminished affection if she were to abandon you as she did me."

"But she would never abandon me," said I.

"Did you have this money when you ran off with Pauline?" said he, as if desirous to change the subject.

"No," I replied, "I was then almost penniless."

"And now you have ten thousand dollars," said he, "it's a large sum to gain in so short a time. Tell me honestly, Pepper, how you obtained it?"

"Honestly, then," I replied, "it was given to me by Mr. Bassett."

"And why should he give you this large sum?" said the old man, looking me steadily in the face, as though he were trying to detect evidence of guilt in my looks.

"I know not, indeed; but he gave it to me without solicitation on my part," I replied, "and appeared to do it willingly."

"It is a strange business," said he, "but I think I can guess what it means."

"You were speaking about Pauline?" said I, anxious to hear more about her.

"She is my child, Pepper, and I can neither hear any one speak ill of her, nor name her faults myself. She is my darling daughter," said old Gil, wiping a tear from his eye, "and I love her better than all the others. I don't want her married. You must not tempt her away from my house. There is Lizzy; why do you not fall in love with her; she is as good a girl as her sister, if you must have one of my daughters? Lizzy writes pretty poetry, and likes you as well as Pauline does, I dare say. Come up and see her."

"I will go with pleasure," said I, "if you will allow me the privilege."

"Allow you the privilege!" exclaimed old Gil; "of course I will. We are not afraid of you; my daughters will be glad to see you. Nancy is always talking about you, and Matilda said the other day she would be happy to see you once more. Come up to-night. You remember Judith, and my two youngest daughters, Agnes and Maria, but they always call you Grimshaw."

"I fear they have all imbibed a very bad opinion of me," said I.

"Not at all," replied old Gil, "they have not heard me or

their mother say any thing ill about you. And there is Maria, who has just returned from a visit to her aunt, who will be glad to see you once more; come up, come up."

"I will come to night," I replied, "but, make no allusion to my Grimshaw freak, if you please. It was one of the deceptions which I was compelled, or at least thought I was compelled to practice."

"Let it pass" said he, "and now about the money? Shall I give you my note for it?"

"No, there is no occasion for that," said I.

"There you are wrong, said old Gil; "there is occasion for it. Never trust to any man's honesty in matters of business. The sum you have given me is too large not to have a voucher for. Here is my due bill for the sum. I have business to attend to now, Pepper, but I shall expect to see you at my house to-night."

So he reached me his note for the money; and then thrusting the papers which lay scattered before him into his hat, he left his office, and I bade him good morning.

My reception by Pauline's father was so different from what I had anticipated, that I felt more sure of Pauline than ever, and had no fears now that I should not be able to triumph over Mr. Barton.

As my wardrobe had been a good deal neglected, and my personal appearance had not been much improved by my recent vagabond way of life, I thought it advisable to do myself justice in the matter of dress, and to pay a little more attention to my external appearance than I had done for the past month or two. I was neither vain of my personal appearance, nor particularly fond of dress, but as I was now about to re-enter society once more, and take my place among respectable people as the possessor of ten thousand dollars, quite a fortune in those days, and as the rival in love of a dashing bank-President, and as the prospective heir of a baronetcy, and a large landed estate, I felt myself bound to keep up appearances, and do credit to those who had

taken the pains to put me forward in the world. While I was in want and looking about town for employment, uncertain about provision for to-morrow, and with no money in my pocket, I would not be guilty of putting on false appearances by assuming a costly style of dress as many do. When I was poor I preferred being thought poor, but now that I was rich, for the same reason I was anxious not to be taken for a poor devil.

So, when I left old Gil's office, I went directly to a tailor's, who had often solicited me to allow him the pleasure of making me a suit of clothes, and procured an outfit adapted to my circumstances; and being so well pleased with my altered looks in my new attire, I was rather anxious for the evening to arrive that I might make my appearance before Pauline, and enjoy her astonishment.

It was very clear that old Gil had no dislike to me, as he appeared quite willing that I should run off with either of his dozen daughters, except Pauline, who was the only one that I had taken a liking to.

After being fully equipped in the latest fashions from head to foot, and establishing myself in handsome apartments in a good hotel on Broadway, I sauntered up and down that crowded thoroughfare, impatiently waiting for the lamps to be lighted that I might burst upon old Gil and his daughters in my newly donned splendor.

As soon as my sense of propriety would permit, I was in front of old Gil's tall brick house, and on pulling the door bell was immediately admitted by the Irish servant, who exclaimed on seeing me; "Heaven bless me! but it is Mr. Walter come back."

And before I could stop her, she ran into the parlor and exclaimed, "here's, Grimshaw come back again!"

I followed close behind her, and was welcomed at the parlor door by Mrs. Gilson, who took my hand in a friendly manner, and told me she was glad to see me once more. This friendly greeting from the kind lady for whom I had always entertained a very sincere regard, as she had been uniformly kind and con-

siderate to me, and seemed to love me because she thought that I was her countryman, dissipated all the apprehensions I had felt of not being well received, and gave me confidence to enter the parlor boldly.

"Here is Grimshaw again," said old Gil, rising and reaching me his hand; "but he is somewhat changed, children, not only in his dress but in his name. He is no longer Walter Grimshaw, the friend, but our friend, Mr. Tom Pepper."

"Thomas, father," said Matilda, who rose and reached me her hand.

"No, my daughter, not Thomas, but Tom. You have heard of Tom Pepper before, children."

"O yes," answered half a dozen small voices; "we have heard about him, is Walter Tom Pepper."

"Yes, my children, this is Tom Pepper himself. But you must call him Mr. Pepper, until he gets another name. But where is Lizzy?" said old Gil.

"She will be down in a moment," replied Matilda.

"And where is Nancy?" said old Gil, for neither of the two were present.

"And where is —," I was going to add Pauline.

"Yes, yes," said the old gentleman, "where is she, where is she? Where is Maria? and what has become of Judith. Call them down, my child;" he addressed himself to the little one sitting on his knee whose name was Agnes.

"I did not mean them," said I, "I meant —."

"O yes, I know," said old Gil, "you meant Caroline, but Caroline is on a visit to her married sister in the next street."

"O, no, I did not," said I, "it was not Caroline that I meant."

"But here come's Lizzy," said the old patriarch, as the black eyed and sedate girl entered the room, followed by her dumpy sister Nancy, "and there is Nancy too. My daughter, here is Grimshaw come back to see you all, but with a new name. But he is your friend the same as ever."

"I am sure we shall be too happy to see our old friend back

again," said Lizzy, reaching me her hand, "to find fault with a change of name."

Nancy merely courtesied to me, for she was the Cinderella of the family, and either preferred retirement, or was forced into it by her more showy sisters, and never ventured to say anything. The old fellow was determined that I should say nothing about Pauline, for whenever I attempted to speak her name, he would say something in reference to one of his other daughters. But as my object in paying him a visit was expressly to have an interview with Pauline, I made another attempt to inquire after her, who was the only missing member of the family.

"It is a great pleasure to me," I remarked, addressing Mrs. Gilson, who had resumed her rocking-chair, "to see you all once more, looking so happy and cheerful; but there is one member of your happy-looking family missing, whose presence would add to my pleasure."

"Caroline?" said Mrs. Gilson as he caught a glance from the eye of her husband, who was looking intently at us.

"No, not Caroline," I replied, "but Pauline? Where is she?"

"O! Pauline!" said Mrs. Gilson with evident embarrassment, "Pauline is——"

"Pauline is engaged;" said old Gil, gruffly, suddenly interrupting, "She is engaged, Pepper?"

"Who is sister Pauline engaged to, Mr. Barton?" asked Agnes.

"Put this child to bed," said her father, taking her in his arms and placing her in the hall; "I am surprised, my dear, that you allow the little ones to be in the parlor when there is company here."

Little Agnes was not disposed of without some pretty loud demonstrations of opposition on the part of that young lady, which had the effect of creating a good deal of confusion in the parlor. But I was determined upon knowing something positive about Pauline; so when composure had been restored in the family group, I asked again what had become of Pauline.

"Pauline, Pepper," said old Gil gravely, "cannot be seen for the present. I will explain to you by-and-by the cause of her absence."

There was an evident feeling of restraint among the girls, occasioned by my enquiring for Pauline, which they made awkward attempts to disguise, old Gil was fidgety, his quiet wife had an uneasy look, and Nancy was silently engaged in attempting a Cinderella-like task of unravelling some skeins of silk, while Lizzy appeared to be busily engaged in looking for a particular passage of a favorite author, which she held upside down. For myself I sat silent and morose, intending to take my leave at once when a fortunate pull of the door bell, and the entrance of a stranger happily caused a diversion of thought into another channel, and relieved us of our embarrassment. The gentleman who came in I had never seen before, but he appeared to be quite at home among the Gilsons, and smiled grimly upon them in a manner which might have been construed into a declaration of defiance rather than a friendly greeting. His visage was very thin and pale, his nose high and sharp, his hair long, black, and glossy like an Indian's. There was an attempt at gentility in his dress, strangely at variance with his manners; as I glanced at his dubious figure and expression, I thought to myself, he must be either a priest turned into a soldier, or a soldier turning into a priest. But first impressions in respect to individuals are generally erroneous. He was neither one nor the other.

"Allow me to introduce you to the Rev. Job Headless, the celebrated Author," said old Gil; "Mr. Headless, this is our young friend Mr. Tom Pepper, of whom you have heard my daughters speak."

"Why, Pepper, how are you?" exclaimed the Reverend and celebrated gentleman as he squeezed my hand with his long wiry fingers, and almost tore it from my wrist. "I am delighted to see you. I don't know of anybody I would have preferred seeing."

I could do no less than thank Mr. Headless for his friendly ex-

pressions, but I was a good deal surprised at his familiarity, and not particularly impressed in his favor. Without having the least fear of him, I could not help experiencing an uncomfortable sensation of his being about to strike me.

"What is there new in literature?" inquired old Gil; "have you got any new works out since you were here last?"

"Not exactly out," replied Mr. Headless, "I thought of a perfectly splendid history yesterday, which I commenced this morning, and I think I shall have it ready for the press by the end of the week."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Lizzy, who was always alive to hear anything new in literature. "Pray what is it? Do let me know all about it before it comes out in the papers. What is it about?"

"I think of calling it the Bloody Battle of Bunker Hill, or Warren and his Warriors," said the author.

"What an admirable title," said Lizzy, shutting up her book. "How impatient I am for the work."

"Do you think it will be profitable?" asked her father; "will it pay you as well as your other works?"

"Why, as to pay," said Mr. Headless, "I am sure of ten thousand dollars which have been guaranteed to me by my publishers; but I shall probably get much better terms, as I have had offers from half-a dozen rival booksellers, who have got up a public controversy about my work, which will make it sell with a perfect looseness."

Old Gil intimated to the popular author that if he had "anything over" when he made a settlement with his publishers, that he, old Gil, knew of an operation by which it might be employed to good advantage. The author replied that he intended "shaving some notes" for a friend as soon as he could get his money, and hoped to make a beautiful operation by it, as the money market was tight.

"O! Mr. Headless," said Lizzy, "you might read us some of your new work; do now."

"I didn't come out for that purpose," replied the author, putting his hands in his pocket and pulling out a small package of brown paper, "but I have just received a revise of my first chapter from the printer, and I will read you a part of it."

"O! you are such an obliging creature," exclaimed Lizzy.

The author drew up to the centre-table, and spreading his dingy proof sheets before him began to read, while old Gil and his daughters drew around and listened with rapt attention, to the following commencement of the new historical work which was so soon to throw the whole country into convulsions.

"I have long thought," began the author, "that a well written history of the celebrated battle of Bunker's Hill was much needed by the readers of this country."

"I should think," said old Gil, "it was no more needed than a fourth of July Oration, for I had an idea that everybody knew as much about it as they could desire."

"Why, sir," said the reverend author with a sarcastic smile, "you may be in the habit of doing things without giving a reason for it; but it would hardly do to write a history of an event which everybody knows as well as yourself, without pretending to believe it called for at least."

"O, if you put it on that ground I have no more to say about it," replied Old Gil, "but you recollect you write that you have long thought of this thing, while you told me just now that you thought about it for the first time yesterday."

"Well, Sir," said the author with another sneer, "where's the inconsistency in that? One day is a long time to me. But, do let me proceed."

"Go on, then;" said old Gil; and the author proceeded in the reading of the first chapter of his work as follows:

"I have long thought that a well written history of the celebrated Battle of Bunker Hill was much needed by the readers of this country, and have, therefore, concluded to supply the desideratum which has been so long felt. The iron hearted men of the revolution having resolved to break the galling shackles

of that scourge of the material universe, the British monarchy, assembled together on the lofty heights of Bunker's Hill on the 27th of June, 1775."

"Was it not the 17th?" said Lizzy.

"Not according to my authorities," replied Mr. Headless; "but a few days matters nothing."

"It was one of the finest days of the season. God himself seemed to smile upon the efforts of these iron hearted men to free themselves from the yoke of the tyrants, by arraying the Heavens in their brightest blue."

"But it appears to me that such a mark of divine sanction as that, was as good for one side as the other," remarked old Gil.—The author did not heed the criticism, but went on with his reading.

"The sun rose gloriously from his bed in the ocean, and lighted up with his brilliant fires the rocky heights of Bunker's famed Hill. The high souled and gallant Warren, mounted on a coal black charger, stood upon the brow of the loftiest eminence with the stars and stripes of his country's flag waving proudly above his head. An immense eagle with outspread wings, was seen hovering in the air, and after circling around his head, alighted upon his burnished helmet and seemed to fuddle him with his coal black wings. The immense army which lined the side of that rocky steep, and stretched far away over the woody heights of Dorchester, until its serried ranks were lost on the shores of Buzzard's Bay, saw the omen and hailed it with a shout that made the heart of Sir Ralph Abercrombie and his army of British myrmidons quail with terror. Shortly after this, the battle begun by a movement of Prescott, who, by a successful manœuvre succeeded in drawing towards him a battalion under the command of General Howe. Simultaneously with this movement the whole British fleet, to the number of forty seven three deckers, twenty one frigates, three sloops, and two ships of the line, which lay at anchor in Massachusetts Bay, began a heavy cannonade on our brave troops with the most perfect looseness con-

ceivable. A perfect torrent of red hot shot was now pouring down upon the heads of our brave countrymen, who received the overpowering and tremendously destructive charge without moving an inch or losing a single soul. The British army having landed at Charlestown Neck under cover of the batteries of their ships, were advancing with the most perfect lightning like rapidity up the steep declivities of the hill, when Warren putting spurs to his gallant charger, called out in his trumpet-toned voice, "God and the Continental Congress," and dashing at a fearful speed down the precipitous sides of the hill, was followed in his irresistible force by Putnam and his light horse, Stark and his dragoons, Wayne and his riflemen, and Green with his heavy artillery. The earth trembled as they advanced, the clouds of dust raised by the tramping of the feet of the chargers created such an impenetrable cloud above their heads, that although the sun was shining brightly in the pure azure above that blood stained battle field, it was darker than Egypt, and the two armies came together with a most tremendous concussion before they knew they were in the presence of each other.

The real work of that memorable battle now commenced in earnest. Warren darted with hot haste into the midst of the Tory ranks, and unsheathing his sword began to wield it about the head of the flower of the British aristocracy with such perfect impetuosity that he found himself in a sea of human gore while whole heaps of carcasses lay piled up around him in the most frightful disorder. The thunders of the marine batteries were still kept up with unceasing vigor, while the flashes of the sabres and the explosions of the muskets, mingled with the sounds of the fifes and drums, the groans of the dying and wounded, and the whistling of the bullets, as they flew over the heads of that devoted band of patriot warriors, made one of the most frightful pictures of war's doings that could possibly be conceived. Torrents of blood were pouring down the sides of the hill, and a perfect hail storm of bomb shells were exploding in every direction, when the noble charger of the brave Warren was seen

to rear upon his hind legs, and uttering that famous shriek which the horses of warriors always utter just before breathing their last on the field of battle, he fell, and his rider found himself on his feet alone, and in front of a squadron of cavalry. Throwing away the scabbard of his sword, and looking proudly at the infuriate enemy, the hero of the day commanded them to surrender. Struck by the noble bearing of the hero, the leader of the band without being altogether aware of what he was doing, tendered his sword to the indomitable leader of Freedom's first champion,—“That is as far as I have written at present,” said the author, rolling up the leaves from which he had been reading. “But you will see the style of the work.”

“It is beautiful,” exclaimed Lizzy, “don’t you think so, Mr. Pepper?”

“I cannot say that I think it beautiful,” I replied.

“But you will confess it is very powerfully written?” said he.

“Why, as to the power of such writing,” I replied, “it must depend very much upon the feelings of the reader. There is certainly the power of reckless extravagance in it; and the power of misrepresentation, exercised to an extent I have never known surpassed. If it be any proof of power to violate history, to disregard all grammatical rules, to exaggerate scenes of carnage, and dwell with a morbid gusto upon revolting subjects, why then it is powerful; but then it is a kind of power which should be suppressed at once, instead of encouraged.”

“Are you in earnest, Sir?” exclaimed the author, jumping from his seat and grinning in a frightful manner at me. “I demand if you are in earnest?”

“Of course it is my opinion,” said I. “Why should you doubt it. Are you in the habit of saying what you do not think?”

“You are offensive to me,” replied Mr. Headless. “I despise you. I always heard you were a rascal, and now I know it.—As for thinking anything about what you say, or caring for your opinions of my works, of course, I don’t. Such an ignoramus as you, can say nothing, nor do nothing to injure my reputation.

I have done more towards the literature of this country, than you could if you should live forever.”

“Don’t get excited, Sir,” said old Gil, while his wife and Lizzy held their breath in alarm.

“Excited! Ha! ha! ha!” laughed the author; “Excited, indeed. I am perfectly free from any thing of the sort. But let me assure you, sir,” and he grinned at me ferociously while he spoke, and trembled as though he would fall to pieces, “let me assure you, sir, I will have my revenge out of you, Mr. Pepper. No man insults me with impunity. I will have satisfaction out of you if it costs me my life.” Then turning to Lizzy and her Mother he said; “good evening ladies,” and made his exit, slamming the door as he went out.

“I am very sorry, this has happened,” said Lizzy, “he is such a dreadfully revengeful person.”

“So am I,” said her father; “I expected to make a good thing by operating with some of the money from the sale of his book.”

“I too am sorry,” said I, “since it is likely to cause you any inconvenience; but I care nothing for the gentleman’s anger myself.”

“Ah! you don’t know him as well as we do,” said Lizzy; “he regards everybody as a personal enemy who does not read and admire his books; and he is always as good as his word, when he threatens to be revenged upon anybody for disapproving of them. But you must be on your guard against him.”

“It was not very polite, Pepper,” said old Gil, “to tell him so plainly what you thought of his writings.”

“And then,” added Lizzy, “your opinions are so different from the public judgement; for his works are very much read and very much admired. I do not much wonder at his feeling touched by your remarks.”

“Besides, Pepper,” continued Old Gil, “books that sell well must be good; and if Mr. Headless finds that the public like to read his books, I think he is all right to keep on making them as fast as he can, and getting all the money by them he can.”

"As to his right to do that it is just the same that every man possesses who has no scruples of conscience about doing wrong when he finds it profitable;" said I. "Every species of vice and villany may be justified in the same way. Those who live by pandering to the ignorance of the ignorant, or the vices of the vicious, who justify themselves by the countenance of the public may all be deemed innocent of moral wrong upon the same plea. The retailer of obscene prints, the writer of vile books, the dealer in unhealthy food, the gambler, the publican, the usurer——"

"That's all very true," said Old Gil, interrupting me; "I don't pretend to deny it; but surely, Pepper, you don't class usury, with the other forms of wickedness which you alluded to? Because I must beg leave to differ with you."

"Usury," I replied, "why I look upon usury as one of the greatest curses to society, growing out of our modern institutions; it makes two thirds of the community slaves to the other third; it creates an aristocracy of the most odious character, exempting men from all the responsibilities of labor, and giving them a claim upon the earnings of the poor and needy, more exacting and pitiless than any ever exercised by a despotic monarch. The usurer, sir, I regard as a ——"

"You do not regard me in that light, of course, Pepper?" said Old Gil, interrupting me; "you do not mean to insinuate that my business is that of a usurer?—because, I never take anything more in an operation than my customers are willing to pay; and they know, of course, what money is worth to them. Besides, Pepper, we must all live—some by one means, and some by another. It is my business to negotiate notes, and help merchants out of their difficulties when they get in a tight place. It will never do to be too particular in these things; the law, Pepper, is the safest guide to follow; and the law protects me in my calling, which, as Saint Paul advises, I endeavor to make sure. This is no more than the christian duty of every good citizen, and as the Lord has blessed me with a large family I

must not seem ungrateful for the blessing by neglecting to provide for them."

"But, I forgot that I invited Mr. Headless here this evening to unite with us in our family worship. As the hour for our devotion has arrived, Pepper, you will not refuse to join us in supplicating the Throne of Grace?"

"O, no," said I, "there can be no harm in it."

"Come, Lizzy, my daughter, you shall read us a chapter from the Bible, first," said the old man.

The Bible was placed upon the centre table by one of the young children, and Lizzy read a chapter from the acts of the apostles, which, either by accident, or design, happened to contain the narrative of the death of Ananias and Sapphira. Lizzy had a very sweet voice and read in a very pretty and devout manner, but there was a little manner of affectation in her emphasis which her sister Pauline was quite free from. Pauline, in truth, had the happy faculty of doing every thing well because she seemed to do every thing without being conscious of an effort, and by an appearance of impulse. After the reading of the chapter all the family joined in singing a hymn, and, at the close of these devotional exercises, Old Gil knelt down and addressed the Throne of Grace, in a very orthodox and business-like manner. The pronouncing the *Amen* was a signal to go to bed, and all the girls, having given their father a kiss, and been kissed by him in return, retired with their mother and left us sitting together.

Old Gil seemed disposed to enter into conversation with me, and after making two or three attempts, he began thus:—

"I have always liked you, Pepper, from the first time you came into my office, and asked for employment, and although appearances at one time were so much against your character, I now believe that you are really honest, and mean to do well.—But, you have got a bad name, Pepper; it won't go down in Wall street; and a man whose name is not good in Wall street, is hardly a suitable match for my daughter. But, notwithstanding

all that, Pepper, I would not oppose your becoming a member of my family, provided you wanted to marry either of my daughters, excepting only Pauline."

"But why object to my marrying Pauline," said I, "when it is Pauline who alone is willing to marry me?"

"I am not sure of that, Pepper," said old Gil; "perhaps you have never asked either of the others."

"To put an end at once to any expectations of my doing so," I replied, "I solemnly protest to you, that nothing on earth could induce me to marry either of them."

This candid declaration seemed to startle old Gil from a comfortable position into which his thoughts had settled, for he received it with a frown and said—"Very well, then; you must make up your mind, sir, not to become a member of my family, for Pauline has other engagements. Good night to you, sir; the chamber-maid will show you to your room." So saying he walked off and left me. It was near midnight, and soon after I went up to the little room in the third story of the house which had been appropriated for my use. I was a good deal vexed at the abrupt termination of my interview with old Gil, for I had determined to find out something in respect to Pauline. But it was too late now to seek for further intelligence of her, and I concluded that she had been sent off to some remote place in the country where it would be useless to attempt to follow her; and being free from any oppressive cares, or guilty remembrances I soon fell asleep and was lost to Pauline and all the rest of the world.

CHAPTER VIII.

I was sleeping very soundly, and lying quite as unconscious of existence as the pillow beneath my head, when a slight noise at my chamber door aroused me. I had forgotten to lock the door, and jumped from the bed and turned the key. Thinking that I had been mistaken in supposing that some one had been trying to

open the door I jumped into bed again and was just sinking once more into a sound slumber when the same noise again aroused me. I was now persuaded that there was a thief in the house, and was just upon the point of giving an alarm, when somebody whispered through the key hole, "Walter!" The voice was familiar to me, but not being fully awake I did not recognize it until it whispered again, "Walter, it is I. Hush, don't make a noise."

I had no light, and as the room was darkened by outside shutters, it was a good while before I could find my clothes, and groping about for them I made a terrible clatter by upsetting the wash stand. Then for fear of creating an alarm I was obliged to remain very quiet again; and I did not venture until some minutes had elapsed, to whisper through the key hole and tell Pauline that I heard her, and beg her to wait patiently until I could put on my clothes.

As ill luck would have it, my boots were new and tight, and after I had pulled them on, they creaked so loudly as I walked across the floor, that I was compelled to pull them off again.—Pauline was impatient and whispered through the key hole again, "be quick, dear Walter, or we shall be discovered."

Another difficulty now beset me; I had completed my dress, and, with my boots in my hand was just going to open the door, when I found it impossible to turn the key. The sweat started from every pore of my flesh, as I encountered this new difficulty, and my trepidation was not at all lessened by Pauline again calling in her sweet voice to hasten, or she would be detected.—After trying to turn the obstinate key for nearly half an hour, in my desperation I took hold of the handle of the door to attempt to wrest it off, and to my unspeakable joy, discovered that it had all the time been unlocked; in my agitation I did not discover that I had turned the key.

No sooner was the door opened than Pauline threw herself into my arms, and I pressed her to my heart with rapturous delight.

"Dear Walter," said she, softly, "we must not delay; it is

near morning, and if my sister should wake and miss me I shall be lost."

"Putting my arm around her waist, partly to support her, for she trembled violently, and partly that she might guide me I followed her along the narrow passage until we reached the head of the stairs when my foot slipped, and we both came near tumbling to the foot of the stairs; but by the self-possession of Pauline, who held me back, we were saved. Fortunately for us, the bed-room of old Gil was on the second floor at the back of the house, so that the noise of the creaking stairs as we descended did not awake him. As he was in the habit of sleeping with a loaded revolver near his pillow, for old Gil had a terrible dread of thieves, he might have put a bullet into our backs if he had heard us as we were attempting to escape.

We at last reached the foot of the stairs, and again were embarrassed by the fastenings of the front door, which I succeeded in removing, after considerable difficulty, and once more found myself upon the side walk, with Pauline leaning upon me for support. Stopping only long enough to pull on my boots, I seized Pauline by the arm, and ran briskly down the street until we were far enough from her father's house to elude pursuit, when I stopped again to take breath, for Pauline was dreadfully agitated, and her little heart beat violently as though it would burst by knocking itself against her waist. The darling girl had not ventured to open her lips since we came into the street, lest she should be overheard, but now that she was assured of being at a safe distance she began to weep violently, and I found it a difficult matter to soothe her.

"Dear Pauline," said I; "you are weeping from regret at the step you have taken. I will carry you back to your father's house, and he will never know that you left it with me."

"No, no, no," said she; "I would not return for the world. No, no, no; I regret nothing. I am very foolish for weeping, but I cannot help it. Surely, I have no cause to weep, for I am very, very happy Walter."

"Then we will be happy, darling Pauline;" I exclaimed, pressing her again to my heart; "I am now in very different circumstances from what I was when I parted with you last. I am now rich, Pauline. I have got ten thousand dollars of my own, and we will leave the city that we may be free from further pursuit or difficulty until we can be married and safe from ever being parted again.

I was curious to learn from Pauline how she knew that I was in her father's house, and also the cause of her non-appearance in the parlor with the rest of the family.

"Dear Walter," said she, "my father has his own reasons for not consenting to my marriage. What they are I have not given myself the trouble to enquire, for it is enough for me to know that he opposes our union."

"Dearest Pauline," said I, "do you not know it is because he wants you to marry that rich bank president, Mr. Barton, that he may thereby increase his bank facilities, and be able to shave more notes than he can now?"

"O, no, dear Walter, it is not that," said she, "for he knows that I never will consent to marry Mr. Barton. I was indifferent to him at first, but when he made proposals to me I hated him with all my heart, and since then I have learned to despise him. This my father knows, and he knows, too, that I will never yield, although he should command me to marry him, which he will not do, for I think he loves me too well. But he is more anxious to prevent our marriage than he is that I should be married to Mr. Barton. The reason of his opposition to you he will neither tell me nor my mother; and as I said before I care nothing about his reasons, yet I love my father, Walter, better than any other person but you. Since my return home from the last unfortunate attempt on our part to be married, I have not been allowed to leave my room alone, and as I refused to leave it unless allowed the liberty of going where I liked, without being watched, I refused to leave it at all; so that I have, dear Walter, been a voluntary prisoner, and not by force. I

did not know that you were in the house until my sister Lizzy, who slept in the same room with me, told me, when she came to bed. I learned from her, too, that you were going to remain all night and sleep in the same room that you had before occupied. I only waited for Lizzy to fall asleep, when I crept out of bed, and having dressed myself without disturbing her, I had no difficulty in reaching your room. You thought me very bold, did you not, Walter?"

"I thought you very generous and true hearted," I replied, "to risk your good name by such an act, and I loved you the better for it."

"And you did not think me bold?" said she.

"It was a bold act," I replied, "and had it not been you, Pauline, I might have condemned it."

"Ha! Walter, you blamed me for it?" said she.

"Not precisely blame," replied I, "but, I cannot help thinking, Pauline, that I should probably have condemned the act if the visit had not been paid to myself."

"Then you blame me?" she said pettishly.

"Blame you! no, Pauline; I can never blame you let you do what you will," I replied.

"But, if you would condemn in another what I have done, you must think I have done wrong. Dear Walter, tell me truly, for you love to speak your thoughts; do you not think I have been too forward?"

"Truly, then, Pauline," said I, "as tenderly as I love you, I cannot be blind to your failings, and I do think that you have been too rash for your reputation, but as I know the purity of your motives, I do not love you the less for it; yet, as you are to be my wife, Pauline, I should prefer that even slander could find nothing in your conduct to found a report upon."

"Ah, Walter, you do not love me then, as I thought you did, or you would see nothing in me to condemn," said Pauline, as her hand suddenly relaxed its pressure upon my arm.

"Fy, fy, Pauline, don't let us quarrel so soon," said I; "it is

beginning to grow light, and we must hasten to a steamboat landing that we may get out of the city before your absence is discovered."

But Pauline did not quicken her steps as I urged her forward.

"Tell me, Walter, once more, that you love me, and I shall be satisfied," said she.

"If you doubt it, my saying so would not convince you. Let me take you back to your father's house, if you are not satisfied of my devotion to you," said I.

"O, no, I do not doubt you; but why not tell me that you love me, if you do?" said she.

"Simply, Pauline, because you and I ought not to be making protestations to each other, as though we were strangers, and knew nothing of each other's feelings. If my past conduct has not satisfied you of my love for you, no protestations that I could make would do so. We are too old friends, Pauline, to be complimenting each other."

"Friends!" said she.

It was a clear case that Pauline was jealous, or sceptical in respect to my professions; or capricious; or disposed to test the strength of my regard for her. As the thought flashed upon me that she might be of that exacting disposition, the unhappy effects of which I had so often witnessed in the case of Mrs. Bassett, I felt a misgiving that Pauline was not calculated to make me happy as a husband. If she could tantalize me at such a time by her unreasonable suspicions of my fidelity, or affection, what might I not anticipate as her husband, when she would have a prescriptive right to torment me? In addition to these unlucky thoughts, I remembered what Mr. Bassett had said about her leaving her father with so little compunction, and her trifling with Mr. Barton; and I began to think that I was acting in a rather hasty manner, and putting my future happiness at stake in a very desperate adventure. To confess the truth, I actually wished myself asleep in old Gil's house, and Pauline back again, under the protection of his roof. Added to these reflections came

the thought of my baseness in repaying the hospitality of the old man, by running off with his daughter, and subjecting myself to the charge of duplicity towards him. It was but just beginning to grow light in the east; the street lamps were burning dimly; here and there we met a laborer going to his work; and now and then the rumble of a cart was heard, giving indications that morning was near at hand, and the city on the point of waking up.—There was a probability of our being able to return to the house, and each of us going back to our chamber without our absence being discovered. Therefore, I said to Pauline; "Let us not act rashly, nor be guilty of any act now, that will be a cause of unhappiness hereafter. If you doubted my love, Pauline, it will be better for us both that you should test it before taking the step that cannot be retraced."

"Let this be the test then, Walter, that you say nothing about returning to my father's. Go on, and I will follow you." And she clung to my arm again as though she were fearful that I would abandon her.

But I was far from being convinced of Pauline's freedom from that womanly capriciousness which is so tormenting to the object she doats upon, and which shows itself in acts of tyranny that makes fools of the wisest men. I could not help thinking of Mr. Bassett's caution to me respecting Pauline, caused, no doubt by his own uncomfortable experiences with his wife, who was once, as loving, as trusting, and as yielding as Pauline now appeared. I could not endure the thought of being forced to act the part of a master towards my wife, and to save myself from being a slave by making a slave of her; and it was still more repulsive to me to contemplate being the husband of a woman towards whom I should be compelled to make use of deceptions to preserve her good nature. I had thought that Pauline was so entirely devoted to me, so confident of my love for her, and so convinced of my integrity, that, under every trial and in all circumstances she would require no other evidence of my devotion to her than such as my conduct would offer, let it be what it might. But this

little exhibition of petulance which she had just made, and without any apparent cause, too, had excited doubts in my mind and made me loth to precipitate our marriage. But there was no help for me. She had thrown herself upon me, and had been induced to do so by my own protestations of love for her, and it was now too late to eject her. She had not changed, certainly; she was the same tender, beautiful, and confiding creature, that she ever was, and showed the same willingness that she had ever done to abandon every body and every thing for my sake; but then, she exacted everything from me in return. I could not but acknowledge to myself that I was no less exacting, on my part, and so I persuaded myself that it was I who was growing jealous, and not Pauline. In conformity with a determination to deal with every body in a perfectly frank manner, it was my duty to tell Pauline exactly the state of my feelings, and what suspicious thoughts had been passing through my mind; and I meant to do so, but I could not then take the necessary time to explain myself in full, for we were hurrying rapidly along the streets, and I thought it would be a good subject for discussion after our marriage, at some time when we might possibly be at a loss for a topic, when I would give her a pleasant little surprise by confessing that I had once been so silly as to doubt her love for me. All these thoughts passed very rapidly through my mind, and they should have passed out of my mouth, but I was too happy to be rid of such annoying visitors, and so dismissed them by a shorter method. I forgot them altogether, for the time, but they came back again and caused me more trouble at another day.

Pauline had an old boarding-school companion who was married to a young merchant in Philadelphia, for whom she had a romantic attachment, and as it was quite a matter of indifference to me whither we went, for Mr. Bassett had relieved me from the obligation to inform him of my intended movements, I readily agreed to Pauline's wish to go to Philadelphia, and after summing our desires by getting married, to make a bridal visit

to her friend, who, Pauline said, would be overjoyed to entertain us. As we had still considerable distance to walk before we should reach the steamboat dock, it was getting to be alarmingly light in the streets, and the increasing carriages and passengers gave us a good deal of uneasiness lest we should be recognized by some of her father's friends. We had no baggage, but Pauline had taken the precaution to compress a few womanly necessities into her work-bag which she carried on her arm, and as I had not yet encumbered myself with any unnecessary wardrobe, we had all our worldly wealth with us. I felt very easy in respect to money matters, as they say in Wall street, for I had taken the precaution, the day before, to draw on old Gil for five hundred dollars, which I had put into my pocket-wallet in small bills, so I had nothing to fear on the score of pecuniary resources, and I promised Pauline that she should have a becoming bride's dress as soon as we got to Philadelphia. We reached the steamboat landing at a very suspiciously early hour, just as they were lighting up the fires under the boilers of the steamboat, and as we walked on board were eyed very closely by the people about the boat, who winked at each other and seemed to guess that we were on a run-away excursion. I took Pauline into the ladies' cabin, and to avoid any further remarks, threw myself upon a sofa in another part of the saloon, where I fell asleep, much to my mortification. Pauline in the meantime sat watching the entrance of the cabin with her veil closely drawn, and scrutinized everybody that came in. By-and-by she came and woke me and told me that I might get up, as the boat was off and there was nobody on board who knew her.

Pauline took my arm and we walked out upon the promenade deck to snuff up the fresh breeze of the bay, which had an exhilarating effect upon our spirits, and Pauline began to dance and laugh with great glee as she looked back and saw the towers and steeples of the city growing dim in the distance.

"Dear Walter," said she, looking fondly up in my face, "there is nothing now that can hinder our marriage. I am so happy,

I could dance for joy. And how delighted my dear friend Sophia will be to see me; she knows all about you, Walter, and has written me that she loves you almost as much as I do, only from what I have told her about you. But she will be so surprised when she finds that we have run away to get married! It will be such a treat to enjoy her astonishment. Shall we be married to-night, Walter, or to-morrow? O! let it be to-morrow, but early. And then I will not call you Walter any more, but Tom, for you cannot be married by false names. And think how funny it will be to make my initials P. P., Pauline Pepper. Well, I think it is a beautiful name, after all. But will you forgive me if I say that I like Walter better, Tom, because that was the name by which I knew you first. Well, I will call you Tom, but I shall always think of you as Walter. But, what shall I say to Sophia; for I have always called you Walter when I have spoken to her about you? Shall I say that you are a new lover, or an old one with a new name? Shall I say that it was I who invented the name of Walter or you?"

She was running on in this strain, chattering and skipping, when she suddenly stopped and exclaimed, "O! Walter!"

As I was looking in her face at the time, I only saw it turn pale, without discovering the cause which had so suddenly affected her.

I caught her in my arms as she was on the point of falling, and supposing that she had fainted from the excitement she had been laboring under all the morning, I was about to convey her into the saloon, when, raising my eyes, I was startled at seeing Mr. Barton standing near us and gazing earnestly at her. But I recovered myself immediately, and without seeming to regard the bank-president, I kissed Pauline, and, whispering in her ear, told her not to allow the presence of Mr. Barton to annoy her, as he had no power or right to interfere with us. She could not rally her spirits at once, and I was rather mortified that she should manifest so much feeling at encountering a person whom I had reason to believe she so heartily despised.

"Don't allow him to imagine, Pauline, that you care anything for him," said I; "but let us keep on our walk on the promenade deck."

But she was so agitated that she could not speak, and it was not very easy for me to keep her from reeling as we walked across the deck. Mr. Barton retired a short distance, and, without seeming to regard me, was evidently endeavoring to catch Pauline's eye; she turned her head from him, however, and letting her veil fall, screened her face from his observation. Feeling myself insulted by his pertinacity in attempting to annoy Pauline when she was under my protection, I placed her upon a settee, and approaching Mr. Barton, said to him, "Sir, you will oblige me by not looking at the lady under my charge."

"Why not, sir?" said Mr. Barton, in an agitated voice.

"Because, sir," I replied, "it is annoying to her. That should be a sufficient reason for a gentleman."

"I shall do as I please, sir," he answered, retreating.

"Then, sir, you will expect me to do the same," I said, shaking my finger at him, "and if it pleases you to annoy her in that, or in any other manner, it will please me to pull your wig off and throw it in your face."

Mr. Barton trembled violently, and turned pale as I spoke, and muttering something about my insolence, he turned and left me. Pauline had overheard our conversation, and was terribly frightened, but I told her not to be alarmed, for we were safe from Mr. Barton's malice, and that he could not annoy us on our arrival in Philadelphia, as I had plenty of money, and we could continue our journey farther South, if it should be necessary to avoid him; his meeting us was evidently accidental, for I knew that he was in the habit of making visits to Philadelphia on business connected with his bank. Soon after this the breakfast bell rang, and we followed the crowd down into the cabin and took our seats at the table, which, as usual, was overloaded with hearty food. The morning air, and the exercise I had taken, had given me a keen appetite, which I was proceeding to satisfy with an

omelett and a hot roll and butter, when Mr. Barton came down and seated himself in a vacant chair opposite to us. His presence did not in the least affect my appetite, but it had a different influence upon Pauline.

We continued our breakfast without appearing to notice our jealous *vis-à-vis*, who watched us very narrowly, and to provoke him I was rather more tender in my attentions to Pauline than I might have been if he had not been a looker-on. We had nearly finished our meal, when the steward of the boat came along calling out, "tickets, gentlemen—tickets, if you please. Don't keep me waiting."

Just then it occurred to me that I had neglected to pay my passage, so I put my hand in my pocket to pull out my purse, and make another provoking display before my old rival, of my roll of bank bills, which would be as good as telling him that I had money enough in my pocket to defy him. But, thrusting my hand into an empty pocket had the effect of an electric shock upon my nerves, and I nearly fainted when I remembered that I had left my purse and my watch under the pillow of the bed in which I slept at Old Gil's house. Not only had I left my money, and the only things of value which I possessed that I could leave in pledge with the steward of the boat, but I had left the note which Old Gil had given me for the money I had deposited in his hands for safe keeping. Mr. Barton perceived the change in my feelings at the approach of the ticket collector and probably guessed at the cause, for he appeared to brighten up, and a triumphant smile passed across his countenance.

"Pauline, darling," said I, whispering in her ear, "did you bring your purse with you?"

But Pauline, if she had a purse, had not thought it necessary to put it into her small travelling bag, which contained her whole store of laces but not a shilling in ready money.

"Come, gentlemen! tickets! tickets!" exclaimed the steward, stopping opposite to where we sat, and reaching out his hand. "Don't keep me waiting. Tickets!"

"To be candid with you," said I, "I have no ticket."

"Money, then," said the steward. "Out with your money. Don't keep me waiting."

"Unfortunately my money is out already," said I. "I have come off and left my purse at home. But I will pay you when I return."

"'Twon't do!" exclaimed the steward, looking me sharply in the face; "you can't come such a game as that here. We are used to such customers as you. I have seen you before, old fellow, so just step out here and go on deck with me to the captain."

Mr. Barton, who had been sitting with a flushed face listening to the conversation between us, now jumped up from his seat and walked out of the cabin in great haste; and, I had no doubt, with the intention of prejudicing the mind of the captain against me.

Pauline was now terribly frightened, and I had great difficulty in soothing her fears, which added not a little to my embarrassment. All the passengers at the table had huddled around us, and I found myself a most uncomfortable object of suspicion to them. A thought suddenly occurred to me, and I determined to make an appeal to the passengers, not doubting that I should find some one among them who would have the generosity to help me out of my difficulty.

"Gentlemen," said I, mounting on the seat which I had occupied at the table, "you appear to feel a very great interest in my affairs, for which please accept my thanks and those of the young lady under my protection; you are very good to evince so much generosity of feeling towards entire strangers, which emboldens me to hope that there may be somebody among you willing to help me out of the difficulty in which I find myself accidentally placed."

Several of the most inquisitive-looking among them at this remark took up their hats, and said they must go on deck.— But a very few remained behind, and I continued my appeal.

"The truth is, gentlemen, that I came away this morning in company with a young lady, and intended to go as far as Philadelphia, but since I sat down to the breakfast table I find that I have left my pocket-book and watch behind me, and as I know but one person on board the boat, there is nobody of whom I can borrow the money to pay our passage. If any gentleman will loan me the requisite sum, I will pay him double on my return to New York."

This candid appeal had a different effect, altogether, upon my auditors from what I anticipated. Not a soul offered to lend me a sixpence, but one or two whistled, while another put his hand up to his nose mockingly. But there was one old gentleman who had listened respectfully to me, who said—

"You remarked that you knew but one person on board the boat, why do you not apply to him; because he does know you?"

"Partly for that reason," I replied, "but not because he knows any harm of me."

"What's his name?" demanded the old gentleman.

"Barton," said I.

"Barton!" exclaimed the old gentleman; "I know him well, and if he will say that you are an honest man I will lend you the money, and you may pay me when you find it convenient. But here comes Mr. Barton. How is it sir? Is this young gentleman an honest fellow? He says that he knows you well and that you know him."

"Has he the impudence to acknowledge that I know him?" said Mr. Barton, smiling; "it is more than I should have expected, and it shows how hardened he is in his villany. Yes, gentlemen," continued Mr. Barton, turning to the passengers, "I do know him, to my sorrow; a greater scamp is not at large."

"Ah! you will repent of that expression," said I. "Gentlemen I cannot explain to you the cause of his animosity to me. But I appeal to the lady under my charge who will assure you that it is purely malignant."

"Who is the young lady?" said the old gentleman.

"I am his cousin," said Pauline, speaking quickly, as if fearful that I should divulge the secret of her name.

"O, ho! You are cousins," said the old gentleman, who evidently was prejudiced in my favor, notwithstanding the remarks of Mr. Barton. "And pray, sir, what is your name?"

"I will tell you his name, and the name of the young lady too," said Mr. Barton, drawing him aside and whispering in his ear.

I now saw that there was no hope for me, and the unfortunate falsehood uttered by Pauline would only tend to convince the old gentleman of the truth of Mr. Barton's charges against me. The two withdrew from the cabin together, and after a short time returned with the captain of the boat, who told me that I must either pay my passage or go immediately ashore, as the boat was approaching the landing place at Perth Amboy. The captain was perfectly quiet and gentlemanly in his manner, but he was immovable, and I soon found that it would be as idle to talk to his steam engine as to hope to make an impression upon him by an appeal to his generosity. To the hysterical sobs of Pauline, he was quite as indifferent as to the arguments I used in trying to convince him that I was entitled to his sympathy. The boat was approaching the landing place at Perth Amboy, where some freight was to be put ashore before going to the regular landing place on the opposite side of the river where passengers took carriages for Philadelphia, and the captain urged me upon deck, telling me that I must go on shore there.

Pauline said that she would go with me; but as my difficulties would only be increased by having her with me in a strange place without a penny in my pocket, I was rather relieved than vexed when the old gentleman who had appeared to feel so much interest in me, called me one side and said: "I learn, young man, from Mr. Barton, that the young lady in your company is the daughter of my friend, Mr. Gilson. Is it so?"

I told him that she was.

"And she has run away from her father's house to be married—is that so?"

I informed him that it was.

"Well, sir," said he, "I think better of you for your candor; and I think you must allow that it will be better that the young lady return to her father; trust her to me and I will see that she shall be tenderly cared for, and restored to her parents.—There is no necessity for your being married to-night. If you love each other, a month, a year, or five years hence, will be time enough; and if you are indeed worthy of her, there is no danger that her father will long object to your marrying her."

"Sir," I replied, "You have shown so much kindness in your manner towards me, and manifested so much good sense in your advice that I feel strongly inclined to listen to it. But, perhaps you do not know that Mr. Barton is, himself, a suitor for the hand of the young lady, and that his animosity to me is owing to her preference for me?"

The old gentleman opened his eyes very wide as I told him this, and appeared a good deal surprised.

"There is something in your manner," said he, "that makes me confide in your statement. But you are a stranger to me, and Mr. Barton is an old acquaintance whose good will it is important to me to preserve. Put this in your pocket," and he slyly slipped a half eagle into my hand, "but let nobody know that I gave it to you. Go quietly ashore at Amboy, and call upon me at my office, when you return to New York. Here is my card."

I slipped the card and the coin into my pocket, and seeing that resistance would be unavailing, as there was a prejudice against me in the minds of all on board from what Mr. Barton had said, excepting only the old gentleman, I had no other alternative than to take leave of Pauline, and cautioning her against the wiles of Mr. Barton, and to return to her father's house, and wait until she should hear from me again, I submitted to my fate with as good a grace as I could.

We had a very tender parting, for Pauline seemed wholly unmindful of the public manner of our separation, and gave herself up to as many endearing expressions as though we had been alone, and I must confess that they were far from giving me any displeasure, for I knew what effect they would have upon Mr. Barton, and that her earnestness would tend to give my new friend a higher opinion of me. As the boat remained but a few minutes at the dock I was hurried ashore by the captain, and left Pauline weeping on the deck, and supported by our new friend, whose name I had not yet learned.

Mr. Barton eyed me with an expression of scornful gratification as I stood upon the tumble-down old wharf, surrounded by an idle crowd of boys and oystermen, who had assembled to see the passengers land. Being the only person who had come ashore, and not knowing exactly whither to turn, they began to eye me with suspicion, and an old man in a red shirt and an antique hat offered his services to me for the consideration of a ten-pence, if I wished to find anybody, or go anywhere. But I declined his services, and to avoid the gaze of the idle crowd who were sunning themselves in front of a small grocery near the wharf, I buttoned up my coat, and walked up through the quiet streets of this decaying old town, as though I were in pursuit of somebody, and soon found myself alone on the highway.

Finding myself alone, with no one to observe me but a cow that was nipping the scant pasturage by the road-side, I sat down upon the clean green sward, and examined the card which the old gentleman on board the boat had slipped into my hand. It bore the name of Andrew Bonfield, which I remembered very well, having often seen it among old Gil's papers, when I was acting as a clerk in his office; but I remembered nothing more in relation to him, and supposed that he was one of the victims whom old Gil sometimes loaned money to at usurious rates.

CHAPTER IX.

I had been sitting on the green sward by the roadside nearly an hour, gazing up into the soft blue sky and listening to the droning noises, that came mellowed to my ear from the surrounding fields, and inhaling the delicious air that was fragrant with the mingled odors of blossoming fruit trees, lilacs, and other early flowers, of which there was a rich abundance in the little gardens surrounding the farm-houses in the neighborhood,—when a gentlemanly looking young person walked past me, carrying an umbrella in one hand and a small undressed leather port-manteau in the other; it was the first person I had seen since I had been sitting there, and I raised my head to look at him; he did not seem to notice me but kept steadily forward until he came to a turn in the road, when looking back he seemed, for the first time, to observe me. He paused suddenly, and after looking towards me a few minutes, retraced his steps and stopped opposite to me, and said, in a frank, easy manner, "How are you?"

I nodded in reply to his friendly salutation, and he said:

"Fine morning;" as if to give me an opportunity to be sociable if I wished. But I did not feel disposed to talk, and I merely replied, "Yes."

"You don't know me?" said he.

"No," I replied.

"Well, that's not to be wondered at, for I suppose you never saw me before," said he. "However, I don't know you, and so we are on equal terms." Having said this, he threw down his portmanteau and umbrella, and seated himself near me. "It's a most delicious morning, isn't it?" said he; "I do declare, I think this place is a perfect Paradise, if there ever was one. I suppose you belong here?"

I told him that I did not, and was only there by the most unlooked for accident, and should leave the place by the next steamboat that stopped at the landing.

"Well, I suppose the place looks different to me than what it does to you, for I know something about it, although I don't live here. I only wish I did. Lord! to live here would be living, but to live anywhere else—don't mention it—it will be death to me."

"Pray," said I, "what is there so enchanting about the place? I must confess I see nothing that is so very inviting, although the air is pure, the fields are pleasant to look at, and the river yonder is a broad and lovely stream. But all these things may be seen elsewhere."

"That's all very true. Exactly so. The air is pure enough in any part of this blessed country of ours, and as for green fields there are enough of them anywhere. But there is something else here, and something that can be found nowhere else. Can't you guess what I mean?"

"Indeed, no," I replied.

"Were you ever in love?" said he, looking me in the face; "did you ever know what it was to feel as if you were willing to die for a woman? to have your feelings so wrapped up in her that you would feel it a privilege to be trod upon and trampled under her darling feet? Whether you ever did or not, is no matter; I am just in that condition myself. I know I am a fool, I am a complete ass; but I can't help it, and I am glad of it.—You laugh! Well, you may laugh at me and welcome; I declare to you it would give me an actual pleasure to be despised for her sake."

"No, I was not laughing at you," I replied; "I was only laughing to think of the oddity of my meeting with a person in a condition so nearly like my own."

"You don't tell me so!" exclaimed the man, throwing his arms about my neck and hugging me uncomfortably tight; "you don't say it! Well, how odd! But don't tell me now, that you have been refused by your lady?"

"O, no," said I; "quite the reverse. But since you are so very frank with me, you shall know just what an odd condition

I am in, and then you may pity me, or laugh at me, just as you please."

I then told him how I had eloped with Pauline, and of the unlucky accident which had caused me to be sitting there, instead of being on my way to Philadelphia to be married. He heard me patiently to the end, and then said:

"You are a happy man; you will return to New York, get your money, and run off again; but if you shouldn't, you will be happy, you are happy now, in knowing that the young lady loves you. But as for me, I tell you I am dead in love with one of the most fascinating, gentle, beautiful creatures on earth, and I don't believe she cares anything more for me than I do for that old cow in the next field."

"That is a pitiable case, indeed," said I, "and if I were in your place, I would certainly try to get the better of my love."

"Get the better of it!" he exclaimed, jumping upon his feet, and dashing his hat into the dusty road; "you might as well tell me to get the better of the color of my eyes. I can't help it. I tell you I love her, and yet I can give you no reason for it; I have tried to argue myself out of it, and the more I try, the worse I grow. If I don't get the better of it, I shall have to jump into the river with my pockets full of stones. It's enough to wear me out; I can't do any business, and I shall go to ruin; she sees it all, and yet she won't give me the least cause to hope that she will ever feel any differently towards me."

"Is she then so cold hearted?" said I.

"No, don't say that—she has a warm heart for everybody but me; she is as tender to the pigs and chickens as though they were her brothers and sisters, and every body praises her goodness and kindness. She loves everybody, and that is what makes me so miserable to think of. If I were a dog, a hog, or a cat, or a ragged boy, or an old blind beggar, she would be kind to me and pity me; but now she hates me, I do believe, and loves everybody and everything besides in the world. Isn't it too hard?"

"It is very hard; but you do yourself an injustice, I must think," said I. "Such a gentle and tender hearted creature cannot surely hate a man merely for loving her. Perhaps she only prefers another person to you."

"If I thought she did," said he, grinding his teeth, "I would murder him. I would have his life."

"If you really loved her," said I, "you would not feel so savagely disposed towards the objects of her regard; but anything she bestowed her love upon would be sacred to you."

"Would it? No, no, you are mistaken, because you have never been really in love yourself. I know I love her, and I know I hate and detest everything she loves. If you had seen me kick that rascal of a dog of hers that she allows to lick her hand every day, you would have known how I felt. It is some satisfaction to me to know that I have half killed the cur. Just think of it, that I love her more than twenty thousand dogs could, and she will not give me the least look of regard, while if a little cur just wags his tail at her, she pats him on the head and lets him lick her little plump white hand."

"Perhaps," said I, "the reason that she does not love you, is because she had formed an attachment for some one before she had seen you."

"Ah! that's the thing that drives me crazy," exclaimed the stranger, again jumping upon his feet and swinging his arms about as though he were fighting with some invisible antagonist; "that is the thought that kills me, and I believe that it is so too. I have heard her mother say something about a person that she calls Thomas, but whether he is a brother, a cousin, a lover, or what not, I can't find out. But I have suspicion he was some way or other connected with her and stood in my way. If I only knew him, I believe I could kill him as easily as I would smash a mosquito."

"Did you want my advice?" said I; "is that the reason of your making me your confidant?"

"No, I don't want any advice; I can't take anybody's advice."

I am driven to desperation, and it is some relief to me to open my feelings to you. You are a stranger and we shall never meet again; and if I should ever get the better of my feelings, you will not be able to laugh at me for my weakness. I know I am foolish and extravagant, but I can't help it, and I am going off to-morrow to travel among strangers and try to forget her if I can."

"Is the young lady a native here?" said I.

"No, not a native, but, like myself, she dropped in here a few years ago, as if on purpose to ruin me; and yet I am so foolishly in love with her that I would not have missed knowing her for the whole world. I was doing well here, at school keeping, and was in a fair way of making my fortune in the world, when this young lady's mother came here and hired that little white house you see opposite the apple orchard up the road, and from that day I have been growing worse and worse. The young lady was nearly grown up, but her mother must send her to me to finish her education. Heaven knows she was more fit to teach me than to learn of me; but I was, of course, glad to have a new pupil, and particularly one who was just from New York, and whose manners would be likely to have a good influence upon my younger scholars."

"Then she came from New York?" said I.

"Yes," replied the enamored schoolmaster, "and I do not believe that the whole city could produce another to compare with her. She is the incarnation of everything that is lovely and winning, and as much as I love her, I cannot blame her for not loving me in return. I know she is superior to me, and entitled to a better husband than I could be to her; and still I am such a fool as to insist on her loving me. But she never will. No, I feel that she is destined to a higher position than I could ever hope to place her in. But, I will tell you one thing, it will not be good for the man who marries her to fall in my way afterwards."

"Perhaps you look upon yourself in the light of a discoverer,"

said I, "and think yourself entitled to the young lady because you were the first to fall in love with her. But there are no patents granted by society in such cases, I believe, although I am not sure that there ought not to be. It would be a very convenient law for us if we could claim the privileges of copyright in such cases."

"Don't make fun of me, if you please," said the schoolmaster with a rueful look; "I am miserable enough already, and if you laugh at me I shall move off and leave you."

"Just as you please," said I; "but I had no thought of making fun of you; I was only applying my thoughts to my own case; for it surely is a very great hardship, after one has discovered a woman worth loving, developed her fascinations, and bestowed his heart upon her, to have another come along and rob him of his property. Indeed, now that I think of the matter again, if priority of discovery should be allowed as a just claim for right of property in anything, it surely ought to be in that which most affects our happiness."

"I agree with you on that point exactly," said the rueful schoolmaster; "and I think that to run off with a man's wife is not half so wicked as to deprive him of the woman he was the first to fall in love with; and since you are of that way of thinking, and have already disposed of your heart in another quarter, I have a great mind to let you see this young lady, whose loveliness I was the first to discover."

"I should be most delighted to see her," said I, "and who knows that I may not be able to convince her of her unreasonableness in rejecting a man who loves her so ardently."

"O, if you could I would be your slave forever," said the schoolmaster. "Come, let us go to her mother's house. She will treat you kindly and give you a hearty reception, as she does everybody."

"Has the young lady no brother or father?" asked I.

"She has no brother," I believe," said he, "unless it be that villain Thomas; and as for her father, he is at sea. It is two

years since they came here to live, and all that time I have been falling deeper and deeper in love; and the more I have tried to get out of it, the worse it has been for me. As soon as the young lady discovered that I had a regard for her she left my school, and although both she and her mother have always treated me in the kindest manner, she would never permit me to say a syllable to her about love. You needn't be at all backward about going there, for they are quite different from the other people about here, and will be as polite and unreserved to you as though you were an old friend. I have sometimes thought that she must be some great man's daughter in disguise, or a runaway princess, or something of the kind, there is such a superiority of manner about her. If you ever had a dream of an angel, or a queen, or anything superhuman and heavenly, she will fully realize your highest fancy, and I dare say, go a little beyond it. I only wish I was a governor, or a member of congress for her sake, for then she might be persuaded to marry me, and I should have some confidence in myself in asking her."

"You either do her or yourself an injustice," I said, "for if she is the superior being that you represent her, she would not listen to you any more for the accidents of fortune or station; and I am greatly mistaken if she would not take pride in bestowing herself upon a school master, whom she loved for his good qualities, rather than upon a governor whom she only respected for his station."

"I wish I could think so," replied the schoolmaster, shaking his head and drawing a long sigh; "but, at any rate, it would give me immense pleasure to have it in my power to bestow upon her the gifts of fortune which I wish I were endowed with. Here is that splendid creature wasting her sweetness on this desert air, and absolutely throwing away her smiles and kind words on oystermen and country bumpkins, and saying the sweetest things to a parcel of grunting pigs and cackling poultry; and here am I, a human being, ready to worship her and marry her,

to whom she will say nothing that is either kind, or encouraging. You will not blame me for feeling such a hatred of everything that she loves when you shall have seen her."

My curiosity was so much excited to see this rustic divinity that I was guilty, perhaps, of a piece of dissimulation in not expressing my feelings least the schoolmaster's jealousies should be aroused and he should refuse to conduct me to her. As we walked up the green lane which led to the little white-washed cottage in which the Circe dwelt, the schoolmaster entertained me with a good many stories of the rivalries, heart-burnings, and small-village wars, occasioned by the marvellous charms of the young lady who seemed to have excited as much hatred in the hearts of all the ladies as she had love in the hearts of all the men. "If you will believe me, sir," said the schoolmaster with a doubting air, as though he did not expect to be credited, in the monstrous disclosure he was about to make, "even the clergyman's lady has refused to call upon her, and has got up a report that she is somebody's mistress."

"I would as readily believe such a thing of a clergyman's wife as of any layman's," said I, "for, as far as my experience goes, I have never found that either the wives or daughters of clergymen were freer from female foibles than the wives and daughters of other men."

"The daughters!" exclaimed the schoolmaster, "why, it is to the daughters that all the scandal can be traced that has been uttered against that innocent young creature who, I believe in my soul, is as pure as her own pet lamb. The truth is, the Miss Hornfagers are the oldest and ugliest young ladies anywhere about, and as they are very virtuous and pious themselves, they seem to have made up their minds that every young lady who is at all good looking must be in league with Satan himself, and given over to reprobate courses. As for the doctor, he too, like his lady, holds the same belief that virtue and ugliness are one and the same thing. He actually shakes his head doubtingly at every pretty girl in the neighborhood, and the incomparable

sweetness, beauty and gentleness of my pupil, at the first going off, gained her such a shake of the head from Parson Hornfager and his wife and daughters, that the poor thing has never recovered from it to this day; and all the people round about here say she is no better than she should be, for no other reason than because she is so much better than any of them. However," continued the schoolmaster, "she knows nothing about these scandalous imputations, and is just as happy and innocent, and merry as a humming bird, in spite of them. If there should be anything wrong about her, it must be owing to that Thomas.—Look! look!" he exclaimed, suddenly stopping and pointing with his finger to the house, which we had approached within a few yards. "Isn't she perfectly beautiful?"

"I see nobody," I replied, "but an old woman in the garden."

"An old woman!" he exclaimed in a frenzied manner; "it is the Lost Pleiad. It is my pupil herself. Don't you see how prettily she stands tying up a vine to that little trellis. What wouldn't I give to be that nasturtium that is looking her in the face as she stoops over it?"

I could see nothing of the beauties or fascinations that so entranced the schoolmaster, for the figure that he pointed at as the Lost Pleiad, was that of a female dressed in a calico gown, with a large white hood on her head, which so entirely covered her face and shoulders, that it was impossible to distinguish whether she were eighteen or eighty. But I soon perceived from the ease of her motions, and the apparent quickness of her step, that she was young, and on a near approach, I could see that she had a round and delicate arm. The Lost Pleiad appeared to be engaged in the very pretty occupation of trimming a vine of nasturtiums which were in full blossom, and, like Proserpine, she might have been the fairest flower in her garden, but I could see nothing of her beauties save a glimpse of her arm, which was promising and satisfactory as far as it went.

As we had approached very near to the garden fence she probably heard our voices, for she suddenly dropped a vine that

she held in her hands, and ran into the house. The schoolmaster followed her retreating form with his eyes, and, as she disappeared, broke out in a new exclamation of praise of her grace and dignity, not trusting to his own powers this time but quoting the lines which Milton applies to Eve. The cottage was one of those common wooden houses which abound in New Jersey—small, slightly built, but neat, quiet-looking and comfortable. A little more care had been bestowed upon the tidiness of the stoop and door; and the windows were all draped with snowy white dimity, and some of them made a display of pots of geraniums and small rose buds. There was an air of refinement about the premises, which were humble, that would have prepossessed me in favor of the inmates, even though the schoolmaster had not given me so glowing an account of them.

"Do this Lost Pleiad of yours and her mother," I asked of the schoolmaster, "reside here constantly alone?"

"Constantly," he replied; "they have had but one visitor since they came here, and that was an elderly looking gentleman who had the appearance of a foreigner; I never knew where he came from, nor what his name was; he remained but two or three hours, and has not been seen here since."

"Then they will be better pleased to see a stranger," said I.

"Of course, they will," replied the schoolmaster; "and now I think of it, you are too good looking. I won't introduce you there."

"O, very well; then I shall introduce myself," said I; "you have excited my curiosity to see this Lost Pleiad, and as I have a couple of hours more to remain here before the steamboat returns, I shall be glad of so delightful a spot to rest in."

The poor schoolmaster looked very rueful as I announced my determination to make the acquaintance of the young lady and her mother, and told me that if I would promise him on oath not to fall in love with the daughter, that he would introduce me at the cottage.

But I refused to pledge myself, not because I had any expect-

tations of such an event, but because the comical term of the poor schoolmaster was so amusing, and I felt sure of relieving his whimsical fears as soon as we should leave the cottage. Finding that he could neither prevent my going into the house, nor prevail upon me to promise not to fall in love with the Lost Pleiad, he at last consented with a very awkward grace to introduce me, and going timidly to the door of the cottage rapped with his knuckles upon the panel, for there was neither knocker nor bell to the dwelling of the Lost Pleiad. We had not long to wait for admittance.

"She is coming," said the schoolmaster in a tremulous whisper; and the next moment the upper half of the door was swung open, and a good natured countenance exhibited itself which was very far from reminding me of the Lost Pleiad, as I had never associated the idea of an old lady in a cotton cap with that celestial stranger.

"O! 'evans!" exclaimed the old lady who had opened the door. "I never saw anythink like it. Have you come back again, Mr. Gossitt?"

"For a brief visit only, Mrs. Swayne," replied the schoolmaster; "I shall not trouble you long, nor again, very soon."

"O! don't say anythink like that," said Mrs. Swayne, whom I instantly recognized as my old guardian of Hague street.—"Don't say such a think. Come in out of the sun."

"Here's a gentleman I would like to introduce to you and Miss Sylvia," said the schoolmaster, "who is going in the boat with me to New York."

"Won't you walk in, too, sir?" said Mrs. Swayne, opening the other section of the door, and looking out to take a close view of my person. "Sylvia will be glad to see you, I am sure, sir."

"I had forgotten to enquire your name," said the schoolmaster, turning to me.

"Pepper," I replied.

"May I have the pleasure of making you acquainted with Mr. Pepper?" said he, addressing himself formally to the old

lady, who was scrutinizing me with an earnest gaze that made me feel rather nervous. "Mr. Pepper, Mrs. Swayne. Mrs. Swayne, Mr. Pepper."

"Good 'evens preserve me!" cried Mrs. Swayne, rushing from the stoop. "Why, if it isn't Thomas! Why, who could have thought of such a thing?"

The kind hearted old creature threw her arms about my neck and gave me a kiss before I was aware of what she was going to do. In truth, I was hardly less rejoiced to see her, than she appeared to be at meeting me unexpectedly.

"Sylvia, Sylvia," called out the overjoyed old lady, running back to the door, "Sylvia come here. It is Master Thomas. It is your old playmate, Master Thomas Pepper. Come in, come in, Master Thomas; Sylvia will be delighted to see you, I am sure. Where did you come from? I never knew anything like it before. Why, dear heart, what has become of Mr. Gossitt? Why, what is that poor man running away for?"

Looking round, I discovered the schoolmaster running with all his might towards the river. Poor wretch! He was probably so terrified at discovering in me the very Thomas of whom he had entertained such a dread, that he gave up the Lost Pleiad as beyond all hope of recovery, and was hastening away that he might not be pained by witnessing the joy of our meeting.

As I had some fears that the poor fellow was hastening to the river to drown himself, I felt impelled to run after him, and save him from an end which I had unconsciously brought upon him. But as Mrs. Swayne's vociferous calls for Sylvia soon brought the Lost Pleiad to the door, the first glimpse of her beautiful face caused me to instantly forget the schoolmaster. I saw at once that the unfortunate pedant had not fallen in love with my old playmate without sufficient cause; and what had before appeared to me a ridiculous passion, I now thought a perfectly rational feeling.

I was completely awe-struck at the beauty of Sylvia, who had grown entirely out of my recollection.

"Dear mother," said Sylvia, stopping upon the grass plat in front of the door, "what is the matter? Who is it?"

"Why, it is Master Thomas, your old playmate," replied Mrs. Swayne; "don't you know him?"

"O! is it, indeed?" said Sylvia, turning her head from me and retreating towards the door; "I did not understand you, mother. Mr. Pepper will excuse my running to the door. I thought it was the schoolmaster."

"Why, where is the girl going?" exclaimed Mrs. Swayne.

"Mr. Pepper will excuse your running to the door, but not your running away from it, because he happened to be there," said I stepping before her.

Sylvia blushed and smiled, and said that I must pardon her, as she hardly knew what she said. Thereupon I took her hand, and pressed it, and led her into the cottage, and was followed by her mother, who began to bustle about to show me that I was welcome.

I could see no traces in the tall, graceful, rosy-cheeked and black-eyed young lady before me, of the frolicsome little Sylvia with whom I had romped in Hague street; and but for the well remembered face and voice of her mother, I could scarcely have believed that she was the same individual being. Sylvia's voice was soft and musical as her face was lovely, and the charming simplicity of her manners heightened the beauties of her person. The little house in which they lived was furnished in the most simple and unostentatious manner; there was no piano forte, nor music stands, nor worsted work, nor cheap pictures in costly frames, nor any of the conventional upholstery, with which ambitious housekeepers in New York encumber their parlors; but the furniture was of the plainest description, and everything wore the appearance of perfect neatness and order.

"It was so good of you, Master Thomas, to come and see us," said Mrs. Swayne, "for Sylvia and me have talked of you every day."

"Mother!" said Sylvia. "Why, mother!"

"It is as true as I stand here, Master Thomas" said Mrs. Swayne.

"Can you not say Mr. Pepper, mother," said Sylvia.

"No, I can't, and I am not a going to try," said Mrs. Swayne; "and I am sure Master Thomas doesn't wish me to."

"Certainly not," said I; "but you forget that my name is not Thomas, but Tom."

"Well, I can't say Tom, Master Thomas," said Mrs. Swayne, "I am sure I couldn't be so disrespectful as that. But, as I was saying, Sylvia and me have talked about you every day; but we never expected to see you again, and here you have come and found us out. Well, it was very good in you, and we are very glad to see you. I am sure Sylvia is, and I know I am."

"I am very glad that I stumbled upon you," I replied, "for my coming was purely accidental; and I did not know that you lived here until I saw you at the door."

"Well, there never was anythink like it!" again exclaimed Mrs. Swayne, stopping to express her astonishment as she was spreading her table; "there never was, I am sure. And where did you find poor Mr. Gossitt, the schoolmaster? Poor creature! You don't know how he has tormented Sylvia, poor child."

"He has never tormented me, mother," said Sylvia.

"No, I dare say the torment has been all with the other side," said I.

Sylvia blushed and said she hoped not, for Mr. Gossitt was a very excellent person, and she should be sorry to torment him. But she feared the poor man was not altogether right in his mind. Mrs. Swayne made an attempt to wink at me, which was not successful, and then she broke out again with an exclamation of, "Well, there never was anythink like it!" And then the good old creature informed me that "Swine," her husband, having gone to sea on a long cruise, and left her half-pay to subsist upon in his absence, she had moved into the country for economy's sake, and that she and Sylvia had been living very happily and very obscurely by themselves, in the little wooden cottage

where I stumbled upon them. Sylvia had learned all the mysteries of poultry hatching, and had become an adept at kitchen gardening; but in practising her out-door callings, she had so prudently sheltered herself from the sun and the wind, by covering up her head with a large muslin hood, that she looked as fair as though she had never walked out of doors except under the shade of an awning. But there was a healthy glow in her cheek, and a ruddiness of the lips, not often seen in those ladies who only take the air on the sidewalk; and her hands, although beautifully formed, showed that they had been accustomed to handle a heavier implement than a needle or a pen. If Sylvia did not know that she was beautiful, her mother did, and was very careful that no exposure should mar the ripening charms of her daughter, and had never suffered her to engage in any occupation not consistent with her delicate frame.

Mothers have an admirable instinct in such things, and know the value of personal beauty too well to permit their daughters to spoil the advantages which indulgent nature confers upon them. Sylvia's mother doubtless had indulged in visions of the future position in the world of her daughter, and looked upon her bright eyes, brilliant complexion, pearly teeth, luxuriant hair, her graceful form and lovely smile, as her capital stock, and, I fear, overlooked the greater charms of her gentle disposition and generous nature. I was not so cool and calculating as to make any of these reflections while conversing with Sylvia, but unresistingly yielded myself up to the fascinations of her presence. These thoughts all came afterwards.

As Mrs. Swayne appeared determined to construe my chance visit into one of design, I was forced to tell her the particulars of the accident which had led me to her cottage; and I was careful to let Sylvia know the nature of my engagement with Pauline, lest she should suspect that I had some design upon her affections. She expressed a good deal of compassion for Pauline, but her mother was content to say that she had never before known anythink like it.

"Do tell me, now, Master Thomas, I mean Mr. Pepper," said Mrs. Swayne, "if your father, the Captain, knew you were going to runaway with that young lady."

"My father!" said I. "Alas! I do not know where my father is, Mrs. Swayne, I fear that I shall never see him again."

"Well, now, Sylvia, did you ever hear anythink like that?" exclaimed Mrs. Swayne; "why, when did you see him last, Master Thomas? How long is it Sylvia since he was here?"

"Since he was here!" I said, starting from my seat; "since he was here, Mrs. Swayne! Do you mean Captain St. Hugh?"

"Well, now, was there ever anythink like i.! Of course it was Captain St. Hugh," said Mrs. Swayne, "and of course I meant him."

"And he has actually been here!" I said.

"It is now more than a year," said Sylvia, "since he came the last time—is it not mother?"

"Yes, and more than two years since he came the first time," said Mrs. Swayne.

"Pray tell me, if you know, where he is now," said I.

But Mrs. Swayne did not know, or, at least, she pretended she did not.

"And for what object did Captain St. Hugh come here?" I asked.

"Why, Master Thomas, I do believe he came for nothink in the world but to talk about you—for he did nothink else all the time he was here, and would hear of nothink else."

"To talk about me, Mrs. Swayne! and did he come here to talk about me, when he might have talked with me and to me. It is very strange."

"Well, it is true, Master Thomas; isn't it, Sylvia?" said she.

"Mr. Pepper does not doubt you, mother," said Sylvia.

"No, no, I do not doubt you," I replied; "but yet it is so strange that I cannot believe it. Did he come to look for me here?"

"Indeed, he said nothink about looking for you, Master

Thomas, because he told me where you were; and Sylvia and me were so glad to hear from you. Were we not Sylvia?"

Sylvia merely blushed in reply, while Mrs. Swayne continued to expatiate on the pleasure which Captain St. Hugh had taken in talking about me; and added that he had made her a handsome present on parting from her the last time.

I was not more delighted to hear of Captain St. Hugh once more, than I was puzzled to account for his visit to Mrs. Swayne, and his avoidance of me in New York, for he must have known where to find me. All that I could learn from Mrs. Swayne in respect to the visit of Captain St. Hugh was that he visited her for the purpose of drawing from her every fact in relation to my conduct during the short time that I resided with her in Hague street. It was very certain, therefore, that he had not lost his interest in me, and still took pleasure in talking about me, but I could find no comfort in this reflection, for it was quite as certain that he saw nothing in my past conduct to cause him to seek me again, and acknowledge me as his son, or he would have done so before. His conversation with Mrs. Swayne, however, had not left on her mind the impression that he intended to desert me, and the utmost of my hopes was that he still retained an affection for me, which his stern integrity of character could not wholly overcome. And I might console myself with the thought that he loved me but was too proud to acknowledge me as his son, because I had by my former heedlessness and disregard of truth, brought a disgrace upon my name. Instead of feeling overjoyed to hear once more from him, and to know that he was actually living, I was depressed in spirit and humiliated in feeling, and could not refrain from tears.

Mrs. Swayne redoubled her exertions to enliven me, and Sylvia even, who had before been nearly silent, not knowing exactly what to do, tried to divert my thoughts by calling my attention to her flower garden. While listening to Mrs. Swayne's account of my father's visit the time had unconsciously flown away, and it was now too late to return to New York on that

day by the steamboat, so that I was compelled to remain and listen still further to the prattle of the old lady, who kept recurring to Captain St. Hugh in spite of Sylvia's attempts to prevent her. The thought occurred to me that my father had been smitten by the innocent charms of Sylvia, and had only made a pretence of his interest in me to have an opportunity of being near her. But that could not be possible, as he would have paid more frequent visits to the cottage. Sylvia herself certainly had no such thought, nor had her mother, and they would have been quick enough to catch at such a thing if his conduct had afforded them an excuse. I was therefore completely at a loss to account for the conduct of Captain St. Hugh, and as it was more than a year since he was at the cottage, he might have returned to England, with a determination to abandon me forever.

"If that is his determination," I said to myself, "I will strive harder than ever to make him reject it, by my future conduct."

Unfortunately for me, the termination of my attempt to elope with Pauline would not be likely to remove any of the prejudices created against me by my early conduct; and even Pauline, herself, would be likely to suspect me.

Having spent the day with Sylvia and her mother, when night came I thought it prudent to leave the cottage, and seek for a lodging in the town, that I might be prepared to return by the steamboat the next day. It was quite dark when I left the cottage, and as I walked through the long lane which led to the steamboat landing, I perceived that somebody was following me, and turning suddenly, I saw a man at a short distance behind me, with his arm raised as though about to hurl something at me which he held in his hand. I stopped, and the person dropped something heavy, and ran; I ran after him, and should probably have failed to reach him, but he stumbled and fell; and as I came up to him, I discovered it was the schoolmaster, who was about to execute vengeance upon me for the warm reception I had received from the Lost Pleiad.

"It is well for you," said he, as I seized him by the collar "that you turned as you did, or you would not now have had a whole head upon your shoulders."

"What, are you such a madman," said I, "that you would murder an innocent man who had never injured you, because he was more fortunate than yourself in being kindly entertained by the young lady you have fallen in love with?"

"I would do any thing. I care not what becomes of me. I wish I could die. I am a poor wretch. Fortune has turned her back upon me, and the sooner I am done for, and disposed of, the better it will be for me!" exclaimed the schoolmaster.

There was something pitiful and melancholy in the distresses of the poor wretch, notwithstanding the extravagance of his language and his ludicrous manner, which excited my compassion, or I would have had him arrested for his attempt upon my life. "Make yourself easy," said I, "and do not fear me; go back to your school and, in time, who knows but you may overcome the aversion of the young lady who has inflamed your passions."

"No, no," said he, in a dolorous tone, "that can never be—she will never love me, I know."

"But, if she should not love you, perhaps in time you may cease to love her, and that would amount to the same thing," I said.

"Never, never, never!" exclaimed the schoolmaster; "I shall never cease to love her and worship her as I do now. She is my Heaven, and I can never be happy without her. Go where I will she will haunt me; and I can never give my mind to any occupation while I am separated from her; so I have made up my mind to die this night. I am desperate and indifferent to my fate here and hereafter. If I had murdered you it would give me pleasure to have been hung for her sake."

Notwithstanding the incoherent wiliness of his manner, and his evident recklessness, I had no fear of him, for there did not appear to be any malice in his disposition; and as to his com-

day by the steamboat, so that I was compelled to remain and listen still further to the prattle of the old lady, who kept recurring to Captain St. Hugh in spite of Sylvia's attempts to prevent her. The thought occurred to me that my father had been smitten by the innocent charms of Sylvia, and had only made a pretence of his interest in me to have an opportunity of being near her. But that could not be possible, as he would have paid more frequent visits to the cottage. Sylvia herself certainly had no such thought, nor had her mother, and they would have been quick enough to catch at such a thing if his conduct had afforded them an excuse. I was therefore completely at a loss to account for the conduct of Captain St. Hugh, and as it was more than a year since he was at the cottage, he might have returned to England, with a determination to abandon me forever.

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Notwithstanding the incoherent wiliness of his manner, and his evident recklessness, I had no fear of him, for there did not appear to be any malice in his disposition; and as to his com-

mitting suicide or murder, his will seemed to grow weak just at the point when the execution of his designs should be carried out. He promised too much to be feared, so I told him that he was only wasting his breath in telling me what he was resolved to do, and again advised him to return to his employment, and bear up under his crosses like a man.

"Ah! I have borne up with my crosses until I can do so no longer. My time has come, and I am now resolved to make an end of my worthless existence; but," he continued in a milder manner, and reaching out his hand, "as you appear to be a gentleman in feeling, I would like to confide to you the particulars of my life, so that when I shall be no more, there may be somebody able to justify my memory. Will you listen to me while I recount the incidents of my life?"

As it was yet early in the evening, and the weather was mild, I consented to listen to the schoolmaster's history, having first stipulated with him to listen to him no longer than he proved interesting. The schoolmaster grasped my hand and thanked me, and sitting down upon a rock near the road side, he began as follows:—

CHAPTER X.

THE SCHOOLMASTER'S HISTORY OF HIS LIFE.

"I was born in a small town in one of the New England States, the name of which I will not mention, for you will discover in the course of my narrative that I have good reasons for wishing to keep my parentage a secret; for although I am willing to exhibit my own frailties, my mind revolts at the thought of exposing the foibles and crimes of those who are connected to me by the nearest ties of nature. Let me observe now, while the thought occurs to me, that nobody can really be unhappy in mature life who can look back upon a happy childhood, and that

those whose early years are overshadowed by misfortune can never be truly happy in after life, let their circumstances be as prosperous as they may. The shadows and the sunshine of childhood will never entirely depart from you; therefore, if you have children, study to make their tender years joyous, and to keep their minds free from the pollutions of evil thoughts."

I assured the schoolmaster that I had been deeply impressed by the truth of his observations from my own experience, and that I felt a degree of interest in him I should not have anticipated merely from hearing that his childhood had been unhappy.

"It was not merely unhappy," said the schoolmaster; "it was dismal, cheerless, black, wretched and desolate. I suffer vicariously for the sins of my parents and am cursed by their transgressions. As I now begin to recall the miseries of my younger days, I forget the despair which has been caused by the Lost Pleiad. There are some things which, after all, I cannot tell you respecting my childhood, for I will not criminate those who have a right to look to me for protection, but you shall know enough to gratify me for any act of violence I may commit, and convince you that it would be less surprising if I were to live with such a black shadow resting upon my memory and chilling my heart, than if I should put an end at once to my miserable existence. My parents bred all my misfortunes for me even before my birth; their marriage was the result of a reckless and guilty passion, and my birth happened in the first half year of their union. Thus there was a foundation laid for me to build up a life of mortifications."

It was fortunate for me that it was so dark, as the schoolmaster would have seen from my burning cheeks how deeply I sympathized with him. Remembering the manner in which I had first learned the story of my own mother's shame, I asked him how he learned a fact which his parents would naturally have striven to keep from him.

"Children learn everything," said he; "they are curious, inquisitive, and searching, and in affairs which concern their parents, have an instinctive cunning in ferreting out secrets. I will tell you how it happened with me, and how I first learned a fact which has since been a source of wretchedness to me. In visiting some of the neighbors, I had seen a family record hanging upon the walls of a parlor, in a gilt frame. It was a poor thing, no doubt, and coarsely executed, but as I had an early fondness for works of art, this family picture caught my attention and gave me a good deal of pleasure; it was a representation of two large red hearts bound together with a pretty blue ribbon, and out of the centre of the hearts grew two branches, having in them heart-shaped green leaves, on which were inscribed the names and ages of the children of the family; while on the red hearts were inscribed the names of the parents and the date of their marriage. In another house I had seen something like this in the large Bible, and as I had seen nothing of the kind in the house of my own parents, I asked repeatedly the reason of it, for I felt mortified that we should not have as much as our neighbors. My mother evaded my questions in such a manner as to awaken my suspicions that she was ashamed to tell me the true cause, and when I asked my father, he struck me so severe a blow on the head that it nearly felled me, and told me not to ask any more impertinent questions.

"One of the servants in the house who had heard me ask my father, had the maliciousness to give me the information which I desired. I was then not quite ten years of age, and although I could not comprehend the story that the servant told me, nor understand why it should be the cause of my parents not having a family record, I could feel the shame of their guilt, and looked upon them with less reverence than I had ever done before. It gave me a painful feeling to know that my parents had been guilty of misconduct, and that I was myself in some way connected with it. It also caused me to feel jealous of my other brothers, and to think that I was treated with greater harsh-

ness by my father, and as I grew older, I thought that my mother regarded me with aversion, as being a living evidence of her indiscretion and guilt. But my matured judgment could have found a thousand excuses for my parents, and I might in time have forgotten their shame, if I had not, like Falconbridge, have gloried in it; had there never occurred anything to destroy my veneration for them, and to cause me to despise their vices even while I could not but love them. My mother was a woman of a quick temper, and of a jealous disposition, while my father was a trifler in his disposition, and at the same time rough and unfeeling in his manners. I do not believe that they had ever loved each other, and, as I have heard, their marriage was compulsory, there was little probability of such a beginning having a happy ending. My mother had inherited a considerable fortune from her father which had been nearly all squandered before I had passed my twelfth year, and then the miseries of my life commenced with all their bitterness, for in addition to the bickerings and quarrels, which I had constantly to witness between my parents, I had to endure the hardships of a biting poverty. The immediate cause, however, of my father's ruin was very curious.

"It happened that my mother's brother, who had quarrelled with my father, and never missed an opportunity to vex him, returned to his native village after an absence of a few years, and built himself a house directly opposite to the one in which we lived. My father's house was one of the largest and handsomest in the town, but my uncle, as if to annoy him, built his house a little larger and a little handsomer. My father watched the building with an uneasy eye, until it was completed, and then swore that he would excel it if it ruined him; and directly began to enlarge his own house by adding a new story, a wing nearly the size of the main body of the building, and by painting and ornamenting quite threw my uncle's fine house in the shade.

"Such a warfare as this, of course, stirred up a good deal of

feeling in the town, and there were not wanting men who advised my uncle not to be outdone by his brother-in-law, and instigated him to a still more lavish outlay of money upon his house. It happened, unluckily for both parties, that my uncle's wife was an ambitious woman, who joined her husband's pretended friends in advising him to make another effort to out-do my father; and we soon saw the masons and carpenters at work adding a Grecian portico to my uncle's dwelling, and converting his coach-house into a Greek temple. Two parties were formed in the town, one of which espoused the cause of my father, and the other of my uncle; my uncle's house being of brick, he had the greatest number of masons on his side, while my father's party numbered nearly all the carpenters.

"Probably you are aware," continued the schoolmaster, "that there is no method of getting rid of money more rapidly than by altering old houses into new ones, or indulging in the caprices of building. If you do not, you may readily conceive such a thing."

"As to that," said I, "I have never had any experience in the business, except in building castles in the air, which sometimes proves expensive and ruinous enough."

"Ah! I have done my full share of that, too," said the schoolmaster, "and know how ruinous it is, but my father's speculations had nothing airy about them; his unfortunate architectural attempts were all embodied in solid materials, which are still standing as an evidence of his folly; in fact, his house is still known in the neighborhood as 'Gossitt's Folly,' and my uncle's might have been called with equal justice 'Gossitt's Ruin.' My father soon began to find that he was indulging in a costly kind of revenge in his attempts to outbuild his brother-in-law, who was in the end the victor, and sufficiently gratified by witnessing the utter prostration of our fortunes. It would hardly amuse you, or interest you, if I were to tell you all the details of the singular warfare carried on by my father and my uncle; how on one side was put up a summer-house in the shape of a Chinese

pagoda, which was directly counterbalanced on the opposite side of the street by a little temple in the style of the monument of Lysicrates, for my uncle was more consistent than my father and stuck to the classic taste with which he had begun; how a Gothic hen-roost was stared out of countenance by a little temple of Minerva, with a fighting cock perched on the pediment as if crowing a defiance to the whole world; how an Elizabethan green-house, which never had a plant in it, was sternly rebuked by an Ionic conservatory filled full of orange trees—and a thousand more wicked absurdities of the kind, which furnished subjects for the village gossips to talk about, and gave employment to all the masons, carpenters, glaziers, and painters; the worst of it was, that, as my father commenced the foolish rivalry, he could not give it up, and was, of necessity, always in advance of my uncle, who had the advantage of his rival's errors to improve upon.

"By and by my father's means began to give out, his credit of course grew bad, the mechanics who encouraged him in his madness found they were likely to be the heaviest losers, and a stupendous out-house in the form of a baronial castle was left half finished. My father's temper was not much sweetened by being compelled to acknowledge himself beaten, you may be sure, and our domestic infelicities were more than ever distressing. My mother reproached my father for his extravagance, and he, in return, upbraided her for her brother's conduct. Ah! many a night did I lie in those unhappy times with my heart beating with fear when I overheard the angry disputes of my parents, and trembled in the morning lest I should learn that some act of violence had been committed. In those days the laws for imprisoning poor debtors were in full force, and poor devils who contracted debts which they were unable to pay were treated worse than the vilest criminals, for every criminal offence had its limited term of imprisonment, but debt subjected the poor man to imprisonment for life. Society has been a little improved in some things, since I was a boy, and poverty is not regarded as

so vile an offence as it was then; if you are frowned upon for your poverty you are not imprisoned like a felon, and the time may come when to be poor will not be regarded in the light of a disgrace."

"I fear not," said I.

"I will not discuss the matter with you," said the schoolmaster, "but go on with my story, which you will find long enough, I fear, before I get to the end. Well, as I was saying, in those days, men who could not pay their debts were generally shut up in prison—"

"To prevent them from ever doing so," I added, "as if to pay, were as odious to the Law as not to pay."

"Exactly," said the schoolmaster, "such is the inconsistency of the Law. Well, the moment it was rumored that my father had failed, there were writs issued against him without number, everything in the house was seized upon by the sheriff's officers, the parlors were stripped of their fine furniture, which was all locked up in our Gothic barn, and the abomination of desolation seemed to have fallen upon us; but the worst was to come. The night after our furniture had been removed, and even the little bed in which our baby slept had been taken, we sat huddled together round a small fire in our back parlor, which looked cheerless enough without carpets, or mirrors, and with but half a dozen chairs, which was all the law allowed, when a loud rap at the door startled my father, who went out and returned again directly looking very pale, accompanied by a strange man who shook the snow from his rough coat as he entered, and told my father he could not wait long for him.

"Who are you," said my mother, rising and looking angrily at him, "and what business have you to intrude yourself in this manner into a gentleman's house?"

"Who am I," answered the man gruffly; "don't you know?"

"Pardon me," said she, "I do now know you, and I suppose I can guess your business. You have come to take my husband to jail—am I right?"

"I am sorry to say you are," said the man, who was a deputy sheriff.

"You are sorry to say you are," said she, "then why do you come here?"

"I must do my duty," replied the officer.

"Your duty!" said my mother, proudly. "Your duty! Is it your duty to deprive my children of their protector and a heart broken wife of her husband? Who made it your duty? Is it not enough for you to deprive me of all my property, to leave me and my children shivering from want in this cold weather, but you must come and deprive me of my husband?"

"The fault is not mine, madam," said the officer; "you must not blame me, but the law, and your husband's creditors."

"Then let the law and my husband's creditors do their own inhuman work," said she; "go back and, if you have any feeling in your breast, do not aid in making us more miserable than you have done already. Don't delude yourself with the thought that you will be pardoned for doing an inhuman act, on the plea of doing your duty; it is not your duty to inflict misery upon us who have never injured you."

"There was a frightful wildness in my mother's manner which terrified me, and caused my young brothers and sisters to set up a dismal howling, in which I joined with all my might. But the deputy sheriff was probably used to such scenes, for he did not appear to be much moved by the distress he had caused. On the contrary, he turned coolly to my father, whose proud and haughty nature seemed to have been suddenly changed, and requested him to hurry and make his preparations, for he had other business to attend to.

"It is of no use to remonstrate, my love," said my father; "I must go, and leave you in God's care."

"The Sheriff's officer said that he had his wagon at the door, and if my father wished to take anything with him he might bundle it in; he remarked that there were no beds in the jail and as the weather was cold, my father had better have one."

The Law in its mercy had left us but two beds, and one of them was brought down, and with a few old clothes, was carried out and put into the Sheriff's wagon. My father kissed us all, and for the first time I saw him embrace my mother in a tender manner; he wrapped himself in his cloak, and we followed him to the door, and watched the wagon which bore him away until he was lost in the distance. The night was cold and stormy, the wind howled dismally through the deserted street, and the snow beat against the windows, and drifted through the cracks, and under the doors, into our cheerless house. I had never known any of those tender feelings towards my father which I have heard other children express, but I loved my father, and even though it had given me no pain to see him dragged away like a culprit under such dismaying circumstances, the distress of my mother would have rendered me unhappy. Let her have felt towards him as she might, or have experienced harsh treatment from him, she showed herself a true woman and a tender wife in his calamity. She shut the door after he had been taken away, and drawing us into the only room which had any furniture remaining in it, clasped us in her arms and wept in silence. Good God! sir, what a world this is, that men should inflict such miseries on each other! I cannot help weeping now when I remember the agonizing feelings that lacerated my young and tender heart that night."

After pausing a few minutes the schoolmaster, for whom I began to feel a strong liking, proceeded in his story as follows:

"At last my mother spoke and said, 'My darling children, your father has been torn away from us, and we are left alone in the world with nobody to help us; but do not cry, nor distress me with your complaints. God will take care of you, even if your poor mother should be taken from you. You must never speak ill of your father, nor think ill of him, for if he has brought ruin upon us by his conduct he did not mean to do it, and he loves you all, and will be kind to you if he ever should be set at liberty again.' After this we all laid down together on

the only bed remaining to us, and, for my own part, I spent the night in thinking of my father and imagining the dreadful sufferings which he must endure in his imprisonment. The next morning my uncle called to see us, to offer assistance to my mother, but she would receive nothing from him, but upbraided him with being the cause of our misfortunes. In process of time our house and furniture, and even my pony that I loved almost as well as my mother, were all sold to satisfy my father's creditors, and we were compelled to remove into a by-street and occupy a very small house; my father was liberated from confinement by some of the processes of the law, but as his debts hung over him like the sword of Damocles, he was prevented from engaging in any business, and having never learned a trade he soon sunk into the despised condition of a broken-down gentleman, and scarcely subsisted by contracting small debts, under false pretences of one kind and another, until an event happened which raised him above such small and shabby expedients, but plunged us into the lowest depths of degradation.

"It was about a twelve month after the night I have described on which my father was carried to jail, when, on a similar evening, as I sat with my mother reading Mrs. Chapone's Letters, for it was the only book in our house excepting the Bible, and I had read it through two or three times for the want of something better, when the door suddenly flew open and my father entered, looking wild, pale, and with blood upon his face. He was so agitated that he could not speak until he had drunk some liquor which my mother reached him. 'Ask me no questions,' he then said, 'take these things and put them away, and give me some water.' She brought him some water in a basin, with which he washed his face and hands, and then threw the water into the fire and burned the napkin which he had used in wiping his face. 'Now let me go to bed,' said he, 'and be sure, if anybody calls for me, to say that I have been in bed since dark, sick. He had not, apparently, noticed my presence in the room until he was about to leave it, when he said, 'what shall we do with this boy?'

And seizing me by the arm he shook me violently, and commanded me, on the peril of my life, not to disclose a word that he had heard nor to say what he had seen, and if I should ever be questioned on any occasion, to say that he had been in bed, sick, at dark."

"I looked imploringly to my mother, but she told me that I must do as my father ordered, and followed him up stairs, carrying with her the things which he had just brought in. What they were I could not plainly see, but I thought that there was a pocket-book among them. It happened that my little brothers and sisters were all abed, and as we kept no servant then, I was the sole witness to the evidences of what I suspected to be my father's guilt."

"I hope," said I, "that you had the courage to resolve to tell the truth, let what would happen."

"Indeed, I had not," replied the schoolmaster. "I wish that I had; but I was too much terrified to reflect, and only thought of alleviating the troubles of my parents. Besides, I had never been educated in a love of truth, and had been too long accustomed to the prevarications and dissimulations of my father and mother, to feel any repugnance to uttering a deliberate falsehood."

"My mother had not been long absent when she returned to me, and although I could see that she was alarmed at something, and troubled in her mind, she tried to appear composed and unconcerned, and made me sit down and go on with my reading of Mrs. Chapone, whose dry moralities now seemed to me dryer than ever. When the wind rattled the door, she started and trembled violently, and as she leaned upon me for support I was frightened to feel the cold and clammy touch of her hand. She sat but a few minutes, when going to the cupboard she poured out a glass of the liquor which she had given my father and gulped it down, and soon after I began to discover its effects; for she cried and laughed, and acted so strangely that I was alarmed at her appearance, and begged her to let me light her up to bed."

"I was too old in the wickedness of the world not to know the cause of my mother's actions, and to feel keenly the disgrace of her conduct; but it was the first time I had ever witnessed anything of the kind, and I attributed it to the pain and anxiety she felt on account of my father."

"Now have I not told you enough already to justify me for being mad, melancholy and misanthropic? Ought I not, with the recollection of events like these blackening every hour of my life by their cursed shadows, to have committed suicide, and put an end to my wretched existence? But I have something worse than this lingering in my memory, and gnawing into my thoughts every hour of my life."

"If committing suicide would cleanse the character of your parents, and give them a good standing in the world," said I, "there might be some excuse in such an act; but as it would only be adding to the disgraces of your family, it appears to me that it would be better to live and redeem your character. If there can be any excuse for suicide it must be when the self-murderer has brought disgrace upon himself, which he has too much honor to bear. But men of honorable feelings do not disgrace themselves by their own acts, and, upon the whole, I do not see that the suicide has any other excuse than that of madness. However, I do not think that you will commit suicide, because you talk about it."

"Ah! you do not know me yet," continued the schoolmaster; "it is not fear that holds me back. However, let me go on with my story, or I shall detain you until it is too late to find a lodging in the village."

"I retired to my bed on that dismal night, but not to rest, for my mind had been so disturbed by the strange conduct of my father, and the still more grievous conduct of my mother, that I could not sleep, and when the cold grey light of morning began to lighten up my dismal little chamber, which was scantily furnished with conveniences, I crept shivering from my bed and looked out upon the cheerless street which was filled with snow."

The wind moaned dismally through the naked trees, and the snow beat heavily against the window of my room, but it was a relief to me to look out into the day-light, I had been so long shut up with my dark thoughts and undefined fears. But I was not allowed to remain long even in that state of dismal suspense, for I shortly heard a loud knocking at the street door, and soon after I heard my mother's voice shrieking as if in agony. I hurried on my clothes, and running down into the entry, soon learned the cause of her distress. The sheriff had again come to arrest my father, but this time it was not for debt, but for a terrible crime. God! how my head reeled with pain as I heard the charge against him, and remembered the occurrences of the night before. My uncle had been found in the street, badly wounded in the head, insensible, and robbed of the valuables he was known to have about him when he left his house. There were tracks in the snow, which, notwithstanding the snow that had fallen, were traced from the place where he was found to the door of my father's house, and they had come to arrest him on suspicion of his having committed the horrid deed. My mother behaved as a wife always should under similar circumstances; she shrieked with all her might, both at the calamity that had befallen her brother and the charge laid to her husband. She fell upon her knees and vowed that he was innocent, and called upon me to sustain her in the assertion that my father was in his bed at the time the robbery was committed."

"And you did?" said I.

"I did. I could not help it," he replied.

"You will never commit suicide," said I; "but never mind, go on with your story."

"Yes, I perjured myself," continued the schoolmaster, "and, following the example of my mother, fell upon my knees and swore that my father was in his bed at dark. The officers were somewhat staggered, but they had no choice in the matter, and begged my father not to think ill of them as they could not do otherwise than arrest him. As for my father, although he was

naturally of a violent temper, and easily excited, he was now perfectly cool under the appalling accusation, and submitted without any show of resistance to his arrest, merely remarking that he was perfectly innocent and should have no difficulty in proving an alibi. But I saw very plainly that he was very far from feeling at ease, he was very pale and seemed to labor hard to appear unconcerned; turning to my mother he embraced her, told her not to be distressed on his account as he would soon be at liberty again; and he even took me in his arms and kissed me, and while doing so, whispered in my ear to remember what he had told me. The officers were overcome by these tender demonstrations and wiped their eyes, and as for myself, I was so unused to anything like even an appearance of affection between my parents that I could not help weeping. The subdued manner of my parents towards each other was like a gleam of sunshine to me."

"And you felt no repugnance at the falsehood you swore to?" said I.

"Truly, I did not; I had more serious thoughts in my mind, and too many griefs in my heart to hesitate about telling a lie when it was likely to relieve my unfortunate parents," said the schoolmaster; "and I cannot say that I regret it now, for it was the means of saving my father from the fate of a felon. My uncle was badly injured, but he fortunately recovered, and either could not or would not give any very clear information as to the person who had attacked him, and as both my mother and myself swore on the trial that my father was in his bed at the time the robbery was committed, he was found not guilty and returned to his family worse in his feelings and more violent in his temper than ever. Instead of manifesting any dread lest I should be driven by his harshness to disclose my knowledge of his guilt, he seemed to entertain a greater degree of hatred towards me than ever, because he felt himself in my power. I was now in my fourteenth year, a wretched boy, with no companions but my younger brothers and sisters to whom I was a kind of dry nurse,

being compelled to wait upon them when my mother was in a condition, caused by her habit of resorting to the bottle for comfort in her difficulties, which precluded her from attending to their wants. I had a thirst for learning, but was denied the privilege, which all New England boys enjoy of going to school; I was growing up in ignorance, and daily becoming familiarized to immoralities by witnessing my father's habitual disregard of truth and every moral obligation, when a change was produced in our affairs by the death of my unfortunate mother who, having drunk freely of her favorite liquor, one night in her attempt to go into the cellar, fell down a trap door and was killed. Ah! there are some who can look back with melancholy satisfaction to the death-beds of their parents, but I can never think of my mother's death without, at the same time, thinking of the cause of her death. Thus you see I have nothing in the past upon which I can look with pleasure, in the future nothing that promises me happiness, and even for the present you see that I am miserable enough."

"But are you going to stop them," said I; "pray what happened to you after the death of your mother?"

"After that unfortunate event," continued the schoolmaster, "my condition was bettered to a certain degree, for my father left the village on the pretence of going in search of business, and myself and my little brothers and sisters were placed in the charge of a distant relation of my mother. As I was old enough to work I was told to look out for a place in which I could earn my own living, and you will hardly believe me when I tell you the various kinds of employment which I engaged in before I fell upon that which I now earn my bread by, and which all Yankees, at some period of their lives, I believe, have engaged in. At first I was put to a farmer, or rather I put myself to one, who worked me as he did his oxen, and appeared to entertain about the same degree of tenderness towards me, except that he tried to fatten his oxen, and seemed to have quite an opposite design upon me, for he was always complaining that I ate more

than I was worth. His wife was of a similar way of thinking, and as I was continually scolded, occasionally cuffed, often stinted in my food and always overworked, I concluded after a few months' trial to abandon agricultural pursuits and try my fortune in one of the liberal professions. Finding that the apothecary of the village was in want of an assistant, I applied for the place, and felt myself, if not the happiest of mortals, at least a very lucky one, when I found myself stationed behind a counter with the rays of two large goblets of green and purple liquid falling like a glory about my head.

"It was purely delightful for a while to be placed in such comfortable quarters, with an unlimited amount of liquorice root at my command, and the privilege of tasting and smelling of all manner of scents and extracts. But delightful as this was at first, I soon found that there were bitters as well as sweets even in the liberal profession of drug-selling; after a while I lost all relish for liquorice, the globes of green and purple water no longer looked so beautiful as they did when seen at a distance, and as I lived in my employer's family I discovered that, however pleasant the apothecary might be, the apothecary's wife was capable of administering doses which my pride would not permit me to swallow. She looked upon the shop as an appendage to the house, and upon me in an especial manner as a convenience designed expressly for her use by nature and circumstances.—While my duties were confined to the galley pots and pestle and mortar, I cared not how hard I worked, but the apothecary's wife required me to attend to another description of pots, which I would not submit to, and as she ruled her husband, I was obliged to quit my pleasant situation, and give up all hopes of a liberal profession before I had half learned the inscriptions on the bottles and boxes on the shelves, or could tell the difference between elixir pro. and borax. Giving up all hopes of ever hearing myself called a doctor, I left the apothecary's shop with my little bundle of clothes, and with a dismal foreboding of misfortunes to come, went the rounds of the village without finding a

place where I could obtain employment, when just as night was coming on, I met the tavern-keeper, who asked me if I wanted a place, and engaged me for his bar-keeper. Here I remained nearly a year, and I might have fallen into such habits that I could not in after life have broken away from them, had not a clock pedler one night stopped at the tavern and offered to learn me his trade if I would bind myself to him until I was twenty-one.

The offer of the clock pedler was very gratifying to me, for it not only provided me an ingenious and genteel trade, but would afford me an opportunity of seeing the world, of which I had heard a good deal by listening to the stories told by the frequenters of the bar-room. I was beginning to be dissatisfied, too, with the nature of my employment, and thought that I ought to redeem the character of my family by striving after something better than the post of a tavern-keeper. As I had a little money due me, my employer consented to my leaving him upon the condition of forfeiting my wages, which I gladly consented to, and the next day started with the pedler for the town where he lived, which was in Connecticut, and entered at once upon my new occupation. But clockmaking did not agree with me; I had no genius for mechanics, and my employer happened to be one of those old-fashioned people who believe that knowledge can be beaten into a boy's head. He tried the experiment upon me, and I ventured to show my disapproval of his method by returning his blows, for I had got to be now quite stout, and as the pedler was a rather small man, I had no great difficulty in getting the better of him. In short, I gave him a sound drubbing, and left him to look after a business more congenial to my natural taste, and an employer who had a different method of instructing his pupils. As I broke my contract by leaving him, of course I got no money; but I had been so little accustomed to money that I did not know the want of it, and felt no great uneasiness at being once more thrust upon the world without a dollar in my pocket.

"I was not long in making the discovery, however, that money was a prime requisite, and without it I had better be out of the world than in it. For some cause or other Yankees have a keener perception of the value of money than other people, I believe, and therefore are more acute in discovering the means of obtaining it, and as I take pride in calling myself a genuine Yankee, I am not ashamed to confess that I never felt the least repugnance of following any honest occupation which offered me a reasonable chance of making a penny; therefore, when I quit-
ted the clockmaker, I did not hesitate to accept a situation as a hostler at a tavern, not because I had any peculiar liking for the occupation, but because no other employment offered itself just at that time. This was, in truth, a fortunate change for me, or at least it so seemed at the time, for I had not long been engaged in my new situation when a travelling dentist having put up one night at the tavern, was suddenly called upon to extract a tooth for the wife of the tavernkeeper; the dentist's instrument happened to be out of order, and as I had learned the use of tools while working for the clockmaker, I offered to mend it, and succeeded so well that the dentist looked upon me as a remarkable genius, not knowing but that I had all my life been engaged in the care of horses. The next morning, as I was getting his horse for him, he came privately and told me, that if I would leave my employer and apprentice myself to him that he would make my fortune for me. I was but too happy to accept his offer, for I was now weary of being confined to a stable with no better companions than dumb beasts; but the profession of a dentist was a genteel and money making business, and by learning it I might yet hear myself called a doctor, which was the height of my ambition. As I had not proved myself very expert in the stable the tavern-keeper was willing to let me off before I had served him the time I had agreed for, and the dentist furnished me with money to travel by stage to his place of residence where he had a workshop for making teeth, when I was immediately set to work on my arrival and quite astonished him by the readiness with which

I handled his tools, and, what he considered a display of natural genius, in polishing metals.

"Unfortunately for me, my mechanical genius did not develop itself very rapidly under the tuition of the dentist, who one day expressed his astonishment to me that I should have such an instinctive knowledge of tools, and yet should be so dull at learning, upon which I explained to him that my knowledge of tools and mechanical skill were the results of a very painful and long apprenticeship to a clockmaker. Upon hearing this, the dentist perceived that he had cheated himself, and immediately flew into a furious passion and began to abuse me, and call me a great number of bad names, which I did not deserve, to save himself from self-reproach for his own stupidity in engaging me. He had bound himself to pay me a certain sum, yearly, until I was twenty-one ; but I scorned to compel any one to employ me who undervalued my services, so I tore up my indentures, and receiving the amount due me for the time I had been at work for him, started once more in search of a business for which I was designed by nature. So far, I had learned something in each situation I had held, and, if I knew nothing thoroughly, I had at least a smattering of a good many trades. The newspapers and the miscellaneous books which I had lighted upon had given me a little insight into literary matters, and a pocket dictionary and one of Lindley Murray's grammars, which I had purchased, out of my savings, enabled me to extend my knowledge of the rudiments of grammar. I was picking up some of the elements of future success continually, and if it had not been for the recollection of my unhappy childhood, and the fate of my poor parents, I might have been happy ; but, with such a gloomy shadow resting upon my memory, I could not feel otherwise than wretched.

"My first move, after leaving the dentist, was into the street, where the stores were, and being unacquainted with anybody in the town, excepting the dentist, I knew not where to go for assistance ; but, trusting to luck, I applied in succession to all the

stores for employment, and at last had the good luck to apply to a dealer in dry goods and hardware, who happened to be in want of an assistant. He engaged me at a very small salary, and to enable me to save the cost of a lodging, gave me permission to sleep in a trundle-bed beneath the counter. I had no objection to this arrangement, and found myself at once installed in a very comfortable position. I was clerk in a store, and could dress myself respectably and associate with genteel people. I did not, I must confess, make a very good salesman, for my employer complained continually that I was not sharp enough with the customers, and that I was too candid in giving my opinions of the articles which were enquired for ; besides these defects, I had, unluckily taken two bills of broken banks, and had once given a four-pence-half-penny too much in making change. I also made another blunder, which was trifling in itself, having only taken a smooth ten-cent piece for a nine-pence, which very nearly resulted in the murder of my employer.

"He had a great fear of robbers and therefore furnished me with a pistol, and told me if ever I heard anybody breaking into the store to make good use of it. One night just after I had crept into my trundle-bed, and had put out my light, I heard a fumbling at the door accompanied by a noise which, in my alarm, I thought was a summons to surrender. So, without more ado, I caught up my pistol, and aiming at the door fired it off and sent the ball through one of the panels. The supposed robber immediately fled, and I was flattering myself that I should be applauded in the morning for my courage, but when the morning came I was horror-struck to learn that I had nearly killed my employer, who had come down to the store the night before to ask me of whom I had received a smooth ninepence, with a cross upon it, which he found among the contents of the till after going home. The pistol ball had slightly wounded him in the arm, and although he was nearly killed by fright he was not seriously injured, and before long returned to business. But this was not the worst misfortune that befel him through my means. I had

become possessed of a volume of Shakespeare, which so fascinated me that I read it whenever I could find a leisure moment. It contained the plays of 'As You Like It,' 'Twelfth Night,' 'Much Ado About Nothing,' 'The Taming the Shrew' and 'The Merry Wives of Windsor.' The perusal of these plays opened a new world to me, and afforded me a degree of delight that I had never dreamed of before. I hugged the precious volume to my heart and kissed it in my transports of pleasure; I placed it under my pillow at night, and read it when I first opened my eyes in the morning. My daily duties grew tediously dry and irksome to me; I longed for a world of romance and poetry, and was only happy in the company of Orlando and Rosalind, and thought all the wits and humorists of the village very stupid fellows when compared with Sir Toby Belch, Touchstone, and Falstaff. My happy moments were after I had put up the shutters, bolted the store door, and crept into my crib, where I used to lie upon my back and read through my volume of enchantment by the dim light of a tallow candle stuck upon the counter above my head.

"As I was indulging myself one night in this manner I fell asleep in the Forest of Arden while musing with the melancholy Jacques, and soon after I was roused from my delightful vision by a suffocating smoke which, at first, I thought was a fire in the woods where I had been wandering in the company of Audrey and Phebe. But I soon discovered, to my consternation, that the store was on fire, and by good luck I made my way to the door, which I forced open and gave the alarm of fire. But, it was too late, the weather was cold, the only fire-engine in the village was frozen up, and before the inhabitants could render the needed assistance the store of my employer was consumed with all its contents.

"A new misfortune now overtook me, for I was suspected of the crime of having set my employer's store on fire, and to escape imprisonment on a charge of arson, I was forced to run off and assume another name."

"This changing of names," I remarked to the schoolmaster, "is an inconvenient way of getting rid of difficulties."

"So I found it, in the end," said the schoolmaster, "but I had no other alternative but to go to prison, or to go off under an alias, and of course I chose the latter course. In escaping from the store I had saved nothing but my clothes and my Shakespeare, and without a cent in my pocket I once more started in pursuit of fortune. Probably you know nothing of the uncomfortable feelings which a man experiences with a sharp appetite and an empty pocket."

I assured the schoolmaster that I knew exactly what they were.

"Ah! then I need not tell you what a harassing journey I had, after I left the town in which my last disaster occurred, as I tramped across the country, and had to stop at the doors of farm houses and solicit the favor of a cup of water and a piece of bread. As night set in on the second day of my flight I was overtaken by a hard shower of rain, and sought a shelter in a blacksmith's shop. The blacksmith told me that his son, upon whom he depended for assistance in blowing the bellows and wielding the sledge, had run off and left him to go to sea, and that he was in great distress, in consequence of the want of help. Here was an opening for me which I at once embraced, and offered my services to the shoer of horses and repairer of cart wheels. I believe that he was more rejoiced to have me than I was to obtain employment that would afford me a sustenance, and immediately bargained with me for a term of two years, at the end of which, he said, I might be master of my business if I attended to it. I do not think that nature ever designed me for a blacksmith, but as she had failed to provide me with the employment best calculated to develop my talents, I was forced to frustrate her intentions, and enter upon a line of business not congenial to my genius. This last engagement, which promised so badly in the beginning, was, in fact, the making of me. In my employer's parlor I found a complete edition of Shakespeare

in ten volumes, enriched with the notes of Pope, Malone and Johnson, whose imperfect appreciation of the great poet, led me to conceive the stupendous idea of elucidating him myself. Was it not a ridiculous thought in an untaught village blacksmith to dream of elucidating Shakespeare?"

"Why, since that Shakespeare himself was only an untaught village wool-comber," said I, "it does not appear to me so very ridiculous."

"Well, that is precisely the view of the matter which I took myself," said the schoolmaster, "and so I set about the task. I worked hard all day, and studied hard all night; and while blowing at the bellows, laid out the plan of my lecture. The occupation of my hands did not much interfere with the occupation of my thoughts, and while sweating and hammering at the anvil, I do assure you that I had some of the sweetest visions that ever visited a toiling mortal in this world. The little smithy was peopled with kings, fairies, and warriors, and there was not a hob-nail in the shop that did not appear to me as bright as a diamond. It was well for me that I had to work hard, for, otherwise, the intense abstraction of my thoughts might have proved too much for my body. Having filled myself with the majestic and tender thoughts of Shakespeare, I was impatient to reveal to the world the riches I had gathered. I did not then know what a world of books had been written on my favorite subject, and supposed that the meagre notes of Johnson, Pope, and Malone, were all that had been published. But I soon learned the truth, for it got noised about the country that I was a miracle of learning, and people used to come into the smithy to hear me talk Shakespeare. The clergyman of the neighboring village came to see me, and finding that I had Shakespeare at the end of my tongue, asked me if I had studied Schlegel, and Hazlitt, and Coleridge. But I had never heard of these authors, and the clergyman kindly loaned me their criticisms on my favorite poet. By reading them I added greatly to my ideas on Shakespeare, and was confirmed in the determination I had

formed to lecture upon the subject of my studies. I told the clergyman of my determination and he encouraged me in the attempt.

"Having made all my preparations, I announced my first lecture at the Village Athenæum, for every village in New England, you know, has its Athenæum, if it has nothing else, and as I was now called the Shakespearian Blacksmith, and was looked upon as little short of a miracle, I had a good audience, and I may say without vanity that I amused them, if I did nothing else, for as I had never had any experience in speaking in public, and had acquired from using a sledge-hammer, a very emphatic manner of enforcing my remarks, I believe I cut as grotesque and ridiculous a figure as was ever seen in a rostrum. My face was begrimed with soot, my clothes were ungainly and old fashioned, my pronunciation was after a fashion of my own; and altogether I think that my audience had sufficient cause for the titterings and grinnings which I could not fail to notice among them. I had about made up my mind to confine myself to the anvil for the future, and to give up the plan of enlightening the world with my lectures on Shakespeare, when the clergyman who had at first encouraged me in the undertaking, now met me as I descended from the reading desk, and told me that I had mistaken my vocation, and had better stick to my trade, for he could assure me as a friend that I should never succeed in lecturing. My pride was touched by these remarks. 'So that is your opinion of me, is it?' said I to him.

"Yes, my friend," replied the clergyman, "that's my candid opinion of you, and I would advise you to think well of it."

"I will advise you," I replied, for I was very angry and excited by the mortification of my reception by my first audience, "to go and hang yourself. I shall go on lecturing, and you will be sorry for the advice you gave me, one of these days."

"My resolution was now taken, and I gave the blacksmith notice that I should quit him at the end of the month, for I had not worked out my two years, and start on a Shakespearian lec-

ture tour. The blacksmith was quite willing to get rid of me, for he had begun to grow jealous of my reputation, and found that I received more attention than himself from the visitors to the smithy, and beyond that, I may say, with candor, that my work did not give universal satisfaction to his customers. Well, to shorten my story, for I observe that the moon has begun to descend towards the horizon, and the air is growing chilly, I started on my lecturing tour, and the things which caused the clergyman to predict my failure proved the cause of my triumph.

"My ungainly manner, uncouth pronunciation, and disregard of the courtesies of polished society, of which I knew nothing, attracted the attention of the public, and I was run after by the learned and polite as a kind of intellectual monster. The singularity of a lecture on Shakespeare by a person of my appearance was so attractive, that I believe I excited as much attention among the literary circles where I appeared, as even the learned pig had done. As I made money by my lectures, and understood the secret of my attractions, of course I took no pains to reform my manner, or to correct my peculiarities of speech; but in spite of myself, I either conformed insensibly to the way of the world in which I now moved, or the world grew weary of my eccentricities, for I found that my audiences began to grow less and less, and I could detect a greater number of yawns among my hearers than I had at first noticed.

"This is always the way with every novelty that is not intrinsically excellent," said I; "if, instead of depending upon your consciousness of manners, you had taken pains to cultivate your mind, and conformed to nature in your speaking, your popularity would not so soon have worn out."

"Of course it would not," replied the schoolmaster, "and feeling the truth of your remarks, I saw the mistake I had made in seeking after a temporary reputation by the arts of the charlatan, and immediately set myself to work to rectify my error. I could no longer lecture on Shakespeare, for, in addition to my other

misfortunes, it was discovered that I had borrowed a thought, occasionally, from Schlegel and Coleridge, and I was unjustly accused of borrowing from Hazlitt and Lamb, of which I was never guilty. I was also accused of quackery, and fell more rapidly than I had risen.

"Those who had once run after me in the height of my popularity, deserted me just as I was beginning to prove myself entitled to their respect; and, if I had ever allowed myself to be deceived by the adulations of my professed admirers, who attached themselves to me for the purpose of sharing in my reputation, I should have felt bitterly disappointed at the defection. But I never had any faith in my own greatness after I had been able to compare myself with the other laborers in the great Shakesperian field; I knew the secret of the excitement which my appearance before the world had created, and felt neither disappointment nor revenge when the bubble burst upon which I had been so luckily borne up into the regions of popular favor."

"In other words," said I, "like other quacks, you did not believe in the virtues of your prescriptions."

"Not exactly that," replied the schoolmaster, "I never gave currency to opinions which I did not honestly believe, but I knew they were not original ones."

"However, if I lost my reputation, I had prudently kept the money which it brought me while I enjoyed it, and I resolved to lay out my capital so as to promote my future interests, for I had now become convinced that money was essential to my comforts. I must confess that I was embarrassed to choose a profession which was adapted to my genius, and, at the same time, profitable."

"And you chose that of a schoolmaster?" I observed.

"I did no such foolish thing as that," he replied, "but you will learn presently how it happened that I fell into that business. As for trade, I knew my inefficiency at a bargain too well to think of the mercantile profession, and for farming I had an unconquerable aversion; I thought awhile of the bar, but with all

my desires to distinguish myself and make a fortune, I could not resolve to sell myself to defend rogues and villains for a fee. I could not descend to the chicanery and low arts of the law. I had no genius for mechanics, and as for physic I had too great an aversion to it to think of making my living by administering it to others. There was but one door open to me, and that was the church."

"The church!" I exclaimed; "surely, you did not think of entering the ministry with any such mercenary motives? The church! Why, what call had you to that sacred profession, which none are suffered to enter who have not a divine intimation that their services are needed."

"I must confess that the church was not exactly to my mind," continued the schoolmaster, "but, as there was nothing else remaining for me, what was I to do? Besides, I had acquired a love of public speaking, while I was delivering my lectures, and there was no other way in which I could so well indulge in it as by going into the pulpit. It is the only profession, too, which covers its members with a shield of superstitious reverence, for in all other callings men must depend upon their own merits for respect; but, in the church they are saved from that necessity, and depend upon their profession. Their cloth is their protection; their vocation is sanctified, and it is, moreover, the only calling in which a man may beg without dishonor."

"These are all-powerful inducements to a lazy man without principle, I confess," I said, "but it appears to me that an honorable man would prefer entering a profession which would require individual exertion to insure the respect of mankind. The dignity which has no deeper foundation than the color of your coat, cannot be very gratifying to the pride of an honest man."

"There is some truth in your remarks, I allow," said the schoolmaster, "but I have great respect for the opinions of the world, and they decide the matter the other way. The Indian, that worships with reverential awe the ugly idol that his own hands have fashioned, is not less sincere in his devotions than the

lover of art who worships the ideal beauty which he finds in a Greek statue; therefore, if your object be to gain reverence, you had better be an Indian idol than an Apollo Belvidere. What I wanted was the reverence of the world, and therefore I determined upon the church."

"You were right, then, in doing so," said I, "but, for my own part, I would not give a fig for the reverence of the world if I could not first reverence myself."

"For that matter, neither would I," said the schoolmaster, "but I can always continue to keep on good terms with myself; or, at least, I have never yet had any difficulty that way. Well, having made up my mind to enter the church, the next question with me was, what church shall I enter?"

"I can well conceive your embarrassment," said I.

"It was the most puzzling choice of my life," said the schoolmaster; "however, I had only to look at the different churches soon to determine where I should most surely find the objects which I desired, and I resolved upon the Episcopal church, with the thoughts of a bishop's gown in my mind, and as there happened then to be two parties in the church, I had another difficulty in deciding on the party with which I would take sides.—Here again, by keeping the great end in view of my own individual advancement, I had only to look after the wealth and power of the church to determine where the path lay which led to preferment, and I chose the side of conservatism and the traditional usages of Episcopacy, for it was there that the power of the church had been derived."

"You are making a precious confession to me," said I, "and, perhaps, you had better understand that you are causing me to entertain a very contemptible opinion of your character.—Although I am not a member of the church, yet I hold in detestation the man who can be guilty of the baseness of entering the sacred office of the preacher from such base motives as those you acknowledge."

"You are very candid, sir, and I respect you for it; but I have

undertaken to tell you the cause of my misfortunes and miseries, and therefore I have honestly stated to you my motives in entering the church, and before I am done you will see what a miserable wretch I am, and how excusable it would be in me, if I were to carry my design into execution and throw myself into the river with my pockets full of stones."

"Well," he continued, "I resolved to enter the ministry of the Episcopalian church, and to take sides with the extreme conservatives, and made known my wishes to a well-known Puseyite preacher by whom I was well received and encouraged to persevere. As I had sufficient money to defray the expenses of my education by living prudently, I entered at once upon my studies, and adopted the priestly dress which was worn at that time by the students in the high church party. By studying hard I was enabled to present myself for admission to deacon's orders at a much earlier period than I had at first anticipated, and passed my examination with credit. In the course of my studies I had some misgivings as to the wisdom of my choice of a profession; in making it, I had looked only at the fortunate members who preached in fine churches, enjoyed large salaries, and were honored for their talents; but I discovered that these were only the high prizes of the lottery in which I had invested my fortune, there was a melancholy army of priests who had to struggle hard for a precarious living, many of them were often without churches to preach in, some had to go off on missions to unhealthy places to labor among the poor and ignorant, and many more had to resort to the painful occupation of school keeping, being debarred, by their ordination vows, from engaging in any more worldly pursuits."

"Very sad, indeed," said I, "must it be for them, if their hard lot is not sweetened by the consciousness of obeying a divine command in their ill-paid employments."

"Ah!" sighed the schoolmaster, "I have felt that bitterness, and know what it is. On preaching my very first sermon, I had made a mistake in putting on a black gown. I found that lec-

turing on a subject in which I was at full liberty to give vent to all my thoughts and convictions was a very different thing from preaching a prescribed set of doctrinal rules. I felt myself that my heart was not in my work, and I heard some of the people complain of a want of reaction in my manner. The formalities of the service I could discharge well enough, but when it came to the preaching I was found wanting; the people were not satisfied with an elegant essay on religious matters, read in a becoming manner, they wanted to be warmed up in their feelings and I had no warmth to impart to them.

"I preached from church to church, but I received no invitation to settle, and at last I was forced to confess to myself that I had been self-defrauded of three years' valuable time, which I had spent in acquiring information that would yield me nothing in return. As my money was all spent, I was obliged to look after some means of support besides preaching, which, as yet, had not produced me a dollar. The vision of a new Gothic church, with a comfortable parsonage attached, which had floated before my eyes during the whole term of my preparatory studies, now vanished, and left nothing better behind than a country school house—the last resort of poor devils like myself, who, after being at great pains to prepare themselves for the post of an instructor of men, have to descend to that of an instructor of children. Although it was not disgraceful in a clergyman to beg, I found that it was not considered necessary, always, for laymen to give; and in the end, I had to accept the best place I could find as an humble country schoolmaster. Yes, I, who entered the church thinking of a bishop's gown, was driven by sheer poverty to become a schoolmaster in this small village.—But, even here, where I have well nigh grown crazy by thinking of my disappointments, and the unhappiness of my boyhood, I have experienced a new affliction from the scorn and contempt with which that darling creature has treated me since she discovered my love for her."

CHAPTER XII.

While listening to the long story of the schoolmaster's misfortunes, I had been sitting on the ground, and did not perceive that the night dews were falling heavily, and nearly saturating my clothes. The grass had become very damp, and as I attempted to shift my position, a pain shot through my limbs, so acute and sudden, that I could not help crying out from the agony it caused. The moon had sunk to the horizon, and the air had become chilly, so that I trembled with the cold. On attempting to rise, for the purpose of exercising myself to set my blood in motion and gain some heat, I found that I was unable to stand, and another acute pain darted through my limbs, and nearly deprived me of breath.

The schoolmaster was terrified at first, but I told him that he must give up his projected suicide until he had taken me upon his back and carried me to a tavern where I could be put into a warm bed.

By this time the moon had disappeared beneath the horizon, clouds had been gathering over head, and the night was very cold; to add to my distress a cold north wind had sprung up which swept heavily across the fields and seemed to be laden with icicles, it sent such a chill through me as it whistled past.—My pains increased to such a degree of intensity that I could not help roaring with the agony I suffered. The village, or rather the tavern in it, was but a short distance off, the schoolmaster assured me, but there were no lights to be seen, and I could not have found my way to it alone. The schoolmaster offered to leave me and go in search of a physician, but, I caught hold of his legs and told him that he must not desert me, for I was fearful of lockjaw, and thought I should die before any assistance could be procured if I were left alone; and then the thought occurred to me that he had conceived the idea of walking off and leaving me to die there, so that he should be rid of a rival in the affections of the Lost Pleiad. But I believe now that I did

him a wrong, for he evinced no disposition to leave me; but, on the contrary, I fancied that my agonized cries gave him a kind of pleasure. I told him that he must take me upon his shoulders and carry me to the tavern, for it was impossible for me to walk, and any delay, I felt, would be fatal to me. I was heavier than the schoolmaster, but he courageously took me in his arms, and occasionally dropping me to rest, at last succeeded in reaching the tavern; and placing me upon a bench on the piazza, he rapped upon the door, and after a long while, which to me seemed a thousand years, he was answered by the landlord in person, who shoved up a window in the second story, and poking his head partly out, demanded who was there, and what we wanted.

"It is I," replied the schoolmaster.

"Who the devil is I;" growled the landlord, "and what do you want at this time of night?"

"Don't you know me? I am Mr. Gossitt," replied the schoolmaster, "and I have got a sick man here who was taken ill on the road."

"What! is it you, schoolmaster?" cried the landlord, "ain't you ashamed of yourself to be cutting up your pranks at this time of night? Go home and go to bed, or I will throw a bucket full of cold water over you." And, with these words, the window was shut down, and the surly landlord disappeared.

"What shall I do now?" exclaimed the schoolmaster; he is one of the most disobliging men in the vicinity; moreover, he hates me because I once delivered a temperance lecture here, which caused some of his customers to give up the habit of drinking.

"Make him open his window again," said I, "and I will persuade him to take me in for I shall die if I am left here in this cold air."

"I know it's of no use," said the schoolmaster, "but I will try, to please you."

So he began again to thump upon the door, and while he was

rattling away by shaking the handle, the window above his head was softly raised, and the landlord suddenly thrusting himself half out, exclaimed, "if you are so fond of cold water as you pretend to be, take that and make the most of it," and at the same moment emptied a tub of water upon the schoolmaster, which completely drenched him. The poor wretch gasped for breath, and it was several minutes before he could sufficiently recover himself to give vent to a round of imprecations which he bestowed upon the landlord's head, forgetting his priestly character in his anger. He was now in reality in as bad a condition as myself, and violently trembled with the cold.

"What shall be done now?" he exclaimed; "we cannot get in here, and there is not another public house. If we remain here exposed to this penetrating air, we shall both be dead before morning."

"That would not be of so much consequence to you," said I, "as you have been contemplating suicide; but for me it would never do; I cannot think of submitting to such a fate. There is but one thing left for us, you must carry me immediately to the cottage of the Lost Pleiad, and there we shall be sure of shelter and a kind reception."

"You would be sure of a kind reception, but they would not receive me," said the schoolmaster.

"Do but get me there, and I will insure you a welcome," said I. And the assurance had the desired effect upon him, for, although he trembled so that he could hardly stand upon his feet, he at once consented to my proposition, and taking me upon his back he staggered off towards the cottage of the Lost Pleiad, and before he reached there, had got himself into so profuse a sweat, that it was probably the means of saving him from a fit of chills and fever, to which the people in that neighborhood were then much given. He did not carry me at one stretch, but sat down to rest, and, as my pains passed off now and then I was able to hobble along by only resting upon his shoulders. But he had a hard load to carry, and was nearly exhausted before he reached

the cottage of Mrs. Swayne; and for my own part, my pains had creased to that degree, and I felt so weak and weary that I could scarcely articulate a word.

In truth, from experiencing a chilliness that nearly benumbed my faculties and caused my jaws to chatter so that I could with difficulty make the schoolmaster comprehend what I said, I had suddenly passed into an opposite condition, and when he placed me on the sill of the cottage door I was in a burning fever, and my brain seemed to be on fire. I was dying for a drop of cold water and motioned to the schoolmaster to hasten and wake up the family, that I might obtain relief.

The poor devil was almost as incapable of moving himself as I was, but he exerted himself to the utmost, and having first rapped with his knuckles on the door, he began to throw pebbles up against the window of the room where he supposed that Mrs. Swayne and Sylvia slept. But it was a long time before any response was given to the schoolmaster's shouts and knocks. At last the upper window was raised a little, and a trembling voice, which I recognized as Mrs. Swayne's, called out, "Who's there?"

"It's I," said the schoolmaster; "come down quick, and let your Master Thomas and me in, for he is sick and in distress."

"For shame of you, Mr. Gossitt," now exclaimed Mrs. Swayne, as she put her head out of the window; "for shame of you, to come here and disturb two lone and unprotected women, in the middle of the night. I never heard anythink so wicked before. Go home, and let us alone, Mr. Gossitt; do now, that's a good soul, for poor Sylvia is frightened out of her wits with your wicked doings."

"My good woman; my dear madam; I beg —," but it was no use for Mr. Gossitt to beg anything of the good woman, for she shut down the window and left him to shout in vain.

"What shall I do, now?" said the schoolmaster, coming to me and taking my hand; "she won't let us in, and if you lie there you will die before morning."

I could only say, "Try again. Tell her it is I who need assistance, and she will come down and open the door."

The schoolmaster again began to throw up pebbles against the window, and to shout for Mrs. Swayne to come and open the door, and again the window was raised, and Mrs. Swayne thrust out her head, and in an angry voice told Mr. Gossitt if he knew what was good for himself he had better be quiet.

"O! you unfeeling and most barbarous woman!" exclaimed the schoolmaster; "will you have one of your dearest friends expire at your own door for the want of a drop of water? If you will not let him in, at least open your door and give him some drink."

"O! if it's water that you want," said Mrs. Swayne, "you shall have a plenty of that, Mr. Gossitt; come a little closer under the window, if you please."

The schoolmaster unsuspectingly did as Mrs. Swayne requested, and stepped close under the window, thinking that she intended to lower something down to him, but the old lady suddenly caught up a pitcher of water and dashed its contents upon his head.

"There, Mr. Gossitt, take that and go home," said the exasperated Mrs. Swayne, "and don't come here to disturb me and Sylvia again."

Wretchedly as I felt, and unable to move myself, I could not help laughing to hear the groans and denunciations of the poor wretch, who was now in nearly as bad a condition as myself.—Mrs. Swayne laughed loudly herself, at first, and kept telling him to go home, and go to bed; but at last she seemed to understand something about his allusions to me, and she said, "Pray, Mr. Gossitt, what do you mean by talking about Master Thomas? He is not here; he has gone to the tavern to sleep."

"Ah! you unfeeling woman," he exclaimed; "have I not been telling you all the time that he is here, and suffering, too?"

"I say he is not—is he, Sylvia?" said Mrs. Swayne, turning her head to appeal to the Lost Pleiad.

"No, no; truly, he is not here," exclaimed the soft, sweet voice of Sylvia, but, without putting her head out of the window.

"Dear, dear me! did ever anybody hear of stupidity like that!" exclaimed the schoolmaster.

"It's you that's stupid," said Mrs. Swayne, "so go home and take somethink to keep you from getting cold."

Mrs. Swayne was about to shut the window, when, mustering all my strength I groaned, in the hope of attracting her attention.

"Good gracious 'evans!" said she, "what was that I heard, Mr. Gossitt?"

"That was your Master Thomas, who is lying at your door, dying for the want of assistance," said the schoolmaster, "and you have been barbarously denying that he was here."

"Master Thomas here?" exclaimed the good woman; "O! 'evans! I will be there in a minute."

The window was suddenly shut down, and presently a light was discovered moving about; the prospect of relief had the effect to cheer me, and I felt better.

"I do believe that the cackling old hen has come to her senses at last," said the schoolmaster, "and she means to take us in.—Yes, she is coming, and I believe that the Lost Pleiad is coming with her too, for I hear two pair of feet on the stairs. Ah! they would have seen me lie here and perish first; see how they rush to your assistance."

The door was now thrown open, and Mrs. Swayne, accompanied by Sylvia, made her appearance with a light in her hand.—They were both dressed without much regard to appearance, the mother being carefully wrapped up with a shawl over her head, while the daughter, in her haste had drawn something over her shoulders, the appearance of a flannel gown.

"Why master Thomas!" exclaimed the old lady, as she held the light in my face, "what is the matter with you?"

"I am very ill, Mrs. Swayne," I gasped out, "but give me some water, I beg of you. I am burning up with an inward fever."

"Why didn't you tell me who it was with you, Mr. Gossitt?"

said the old lady, turning to the schoolmaster, who stood shivering with cold. But, without waiting for a reply, she ran off to bring me some water, while, by the aid of Sylvia and the schoolmaster, I made out to get inside the house and fell helpless upon the floor. A glass of cool water was refreshing to me for a moment or two, but I was soon seized with another fit of freezing ague, and called for blankets as earnestly as I had before done for cold water.

They got me to bed after a while, and the schoolmaster was sent for a physician, who did not arrive until day light, when he bled me until I fainted, and then left some medicines, which were administered to me as soon as I revived. What became of the schoolmaster, or what happened afterwards during the following week I know not, for, either owing to the improper treatment of my disorder by the physician, or from some other cause, I sank into a state of delirium, from which I did not recover in all that time. My mind was not inert during these weary nights and days, but was busy with horrible visions, which even now make me shudder when I think of them; sleeping or waking the monstrous distortions of my fevered fancy filled my brain and gave me no rest from my wretchedness. I was either burning in a lake of smolten lead, or lying in some damp, cold dungeon, with shapeless monsters crawling over me with their slimy limbs, and glaring into my very soul with their hideous green eyes.

It is a terrible thing to be sick; to lie all day upon a fevered bed, and to hear the sounds of life and merriment without; to see the shadows of birds, as they flit past your window; to hear the joyous shouts of children, and the harsher voices of sturdy laborers as they pass to their appointed work; to know that while you lie weak and helpless, the victim of a wasting disease, the world is as full of sweetness and beauty as ever, but that you are debarred from tasting or enjoying any of its pleasures; to know that flowers are blooming, that the water sparkles in the sun, that the clouds float in the blue ether as they did

when you too were free from pain; and that everything is happy and free from wretchedness but yourself. But the night is more wearisome than the day, for then all nature is still, and the drowsy world is hushed in sleep, while you toss upon your bed, listening to the dull sounds of droning flies, or the thick breath of the heavy sleepers around you. The night-lamp placed in a corner emits a sickly light, and casts long and dull shadows upon the walls of your room; the chairs and tables become fearful objects, and by gazing steadily at the furniture of your apartment it becomes imbued with a dull life which seems to be a part of your own; the atmosphere grows oppressive, and your mind wanders back to the days of hilarious health, when you were free from pain and suffering, and breathed the pure sweet air, and ran at will over the fields, or wandered by the seashore; the ticking of your watch becomes fearfully distinct, and seems to be measuring out to you the weary moments you have to live and suffer. You turn, and turn, and turn again, trying to find some spot on your heated bed which will afford you but a moment's ease, but you turn in vain; the night hours drag slowly along, and you think that morning with its cold light will never come. But worse than all, the evil that you have done comes back in frightful distinctness to oppress you; all your follies revisit you, and the good that you might have done, the opportunities for improvement which you have lost, the friends you have offended, the wealth you have wasted and the health you have set lightly by—all rush into your thoughts, and you wonder how things that you had forgotten for years should again come back to you as though they had been the occurrences of yesterday; if you doze, it is but to have exaggerated dreams of your distresses, and you wake to the realities of your pain, and fear to sleep again, and dread to remain awake; you envy the droning fly that buzzes about your ears, and wonder why he does not make his way through the crack in the window to the free air instead of bumping his head against the wall above your bed; and the mouse that creeps into the room, encouraged by

the stillness and deadness of everything around you, to pick up the crumbs which you have dropped from your bedside, appears to you a happy creature, and to be envied.

All these experiences I realized in a more distressing manner than I can describe, while I lay sick in the best room of Mrs. Swayne's cottage, my sole visitors being the good old lady herself, the Lost Pleiad, the doctor, and the schoolmaster. The schoolmaster would have remained with me all the time if he had been permitted, merely for the sake of being near the object of his adoration, and now and then having the pleasure of being spoken to by her. Whether or not I received any benefits from the visits of the doctor, I could not exactly tell, but I suspect that I got well in spite of him, rather than in consequence of his prescriptions. The schoolmaster, I have no doubt, put up prayers hourly for my release from all earthly suffering, but I was perfectly safe from all harm from him, otherwise; for he knew that his only way to gain the affection of the Lost Pleiad was to treat me with tender care, and that any lack of attention to my wants would gain her instant displeasure, and an expulsion from the cottage. But the ministering angel of my sick bed was the Lost Pleiad herself, who watched over me with the tenderest care, anticipated all my wishes, and soothed me by her gentle attentions. One of the things which I remember with the greatest pleasure was her bathing my head in cool rose-water, when my brain seemed on fire and my skull ready to crack from the bursting pressure within. Dipping her hand in the basin of cool and fragrant water, she would pass it gently over my forehead, softly and soothingly, until gradually the pain would diminish, the fiery pressure would cease, and I would sink into a refreshing slumber, always productive of pleasant dreams, and wake to find her still carefully watching by my side.

I had been lying ill three weeks, and had just begun to gain a little strength so that I could sit up and look out of the window for a few minutes to refresh myself by a sight of the beautiful and unchanged view from the cottage, which embraced a good

many objects of tranquillizing aspect, when it occurred to me that Mrs. Swayne must have been put to great straits to provide the necessities for me out of her slender income.

"Sylvia," said I—for the Lost Pleiad was sitting by my side, and pointing out to me the particular points in the landscape which she thought would interest me—"has not your mother been put to great inconvenience by my unlooked for presence here?"

"Oh, no; she would have spent her time in some useless work, if you had not come," said Sylvia, "and I am sure she takes pleasure in waiting on you, for she loves you very much."

"I do not doubt her love, Sylvia, nor yours"—Sylvia blushed and turned her head—"I mean your good will, Sylvia, and your readiness to serve me as you would any body in distress, but what I mean is, has she not been compelled to spend more than was convenient for her?"

"Oh, no! no! no!" exclaimed Sylvia; "there has been no lack of money; there has been plenty of it. I never heard my mother complain that she had not a plenty. She has had more than she wanted."

"That is a relief to me," I replied, "for I have feared that her small income would not be enough to meet the new demands upon her purse, which my sickness has created. But when I get well enough to write, Sylvia, I can send to New York, and get money enough to repay both her and you for your goodness."

Sylvia looked me full in the face with a look which seemed to say, "What, do you mean to offer *me* money for my services?"

"I do not mean to *pay you*, Sylvia, because that I could not do with money; I only meant that your mother should be amply compensated for all the expense she may have incurred on my account, and that if money can be any recompense, even to you, that it shall, at least, be a proof of my gratitude."

"If you have any money in New York," replied Sylvia, turning her head away, "you had better keep it there; and as for my mother, she has been well repaid already. She will never accept anything from you, be assured. But let us not talk about

pay and money, but look out of the window and enjoy the prospect you were admiring. Does not the river look beautifully blue through those elms ?”

“ I will look at the river by-and-by, Sylvia ; but tell me first, by whom has your mother been repaid, or do you mean that she has been repaid by her own good heart ?”

“ Oh, do not ask me any more questions, if you please,” replied Sylvia ; “ such talk will only do you harm, and, perhaps, bring on a fresh attack of your disease.”

“ No, no, Sylvia,” said I, taking her hand, and involuntarily pressing it ; “ you must not keep anything secret from me ; you and I must not be guilty of double dealing ; we are too old and too good friends for that. You must be sincere and candid, and tell me what you meant when you said that your mother had been repaid. I must know.”

“ I cannot tell you more, now ; I am under a pledge ; so do not ask me again. You know I would not deceive you.”

I was determined to know more, for the manner of Sylvia, rather than her words, had excited my curiosity ; for I saw that there was something in her thoughts which she had unconsciously let slip. But, unfortunately, just at that moment the schoolmaster tapped at the door, and Sylvia seized upon the occasion to leave me alone with him. I was provoked at the interruption, but was too feeble to be angry.

“ You will soon be well,” said the schoolmaster, as he threw himself upon my bed, for Mr. Gossitt had a way of making himself at home anywhere, not appearing to have any idea of individuality in property, except in regard to that which he possessed himself,—and, by the way, as I have got into a digression, I may as well observe that this feeling of partnership in other people’s goods, according to his own confession, manifested itself pretty strongly in his Shakesperian lectures, wherein he appropriated to his own use whatever he had the good luck to find to his liking in Schlegel, Coleridge, and Hazlitt.

—“ You will soon be well again,” said the schoolmaster, as he

doubled up one of the pillows of my bed to enable him to talk with the greater ease, as he lay stretched upon my mattress ; “ and then I suppose I shall no longer have the privilege of paying a daily visit here ?”

“ I hope so,” I replied.

“ Which do you hope ?” said he.

“ That I shall soon be well,” I replied, “ for you may be sure that I have no objections to your daily visits here.”

“ Ah ! you haven’t,” said he ; “ well, perhaps the reason is, that when you go you mean to take the Lost Pleiad with you ?”

“ I mean to do nothing of the kind,” said I, “ for Sylvia would not go with me if I were disposed to take her ; and I have already told you that I am positively engaged to be married to another. I could not violate my word.”

“ Lovers’ oaths,” said the schoolmaster, “ are made to be broken.”

“ But I am a man as well as a lover,” I replied to him, “ and I cannot break my word.”

“ But suppose your word had not been passed, how then would it be with you and the Lost Pleiad ?” said he.

“ To save yourself from a worse reply, Mr. Gossitt,” said I, “ don’t take offence if I tell you, now, that your question is impertinent.”

“ Oh ! You think it is ? Well, I wanted to know how it would be, for private reasons of my own, or I would not have asked,” said the schoolmaster ; “ however, if you are particular about it, I will not press the matter, of course ; but I could tell you something about the Lost Pleiad and her mother, which might interest you.”

“ I have no wish to know anything,” I replied, “ which they are not willing to tell me themselves. However, as you have hinted at something that exists which I should know, you had better tell it ; for, in my weak state, I cannot afford to be annoyed by suspicions. Out with it, if you please.”

“ You would think it impertinent in me, I dare say, if you

knew; and so I rather think it will be the better way for me to shut up, and say nothing."

It occurred to me that the schoolmaster might know something about the money hinted at by Sylvia, which her mother had received. "Pray, tell me, Mr. Gossitt," said I, "if I have been visited by any one except yourself and the doctor, since I have been sick?"

"Well, the clergyman has been here and prayed with you about a dozen times, and I am not sure but his prayers have done you more good than the doctor's pills."

"You are a buffoon," said I angrily, "to make light of so serious a matter as my illness. I knew that the clergyman had been here; he made me a long prayer that morning, or rather, I should say, he made a long prayer for me. But are you sure there has been no one else here?"

"I cannot say I am sure there has *not* been anybody else here," said the schoolmaster, with a most provokingly meaning emphasis.

"Can't you say, then, that there has been somebody else here?" I asked.

"Well, perhaps I could; but it might be considered impertinent in me to do so,—and, upon the whole, I think I shall throw myself upon my reserved rights, and refuse to answer any impertinent questions whatever."

I was by this time completely wearied out, and so vexed at the provoking replies of the schoolmaster, that I had to request him to rise from my bed so that I could lie upon it myself. The schoolmaster assisted me to lie down, but refused to tell me anything more satisfactory than what I had already been able to sift out of him. But I was quite sure, from what he and Sylvia said, that something had happened respecting me which, for some reason that I could not guess at, they had resolved that I should not know.

Had Mr. Bassett been informed of my situation, and paid me a stealthy visit? Nothing was more likely; yet, if he had

come at all why should his arrival have been kept secret from me? It could not have been he. Could it have been Old Gil? would he have been at the trouble to come and see me?—clearly not. Who then could it have been? A sudden thought occurred to me, which should have suggested itself at first. Who was there so likely to visit me as Pauline herself. It must have been she, and I could readily understand why she would desire that her visit should be unknown to me. It was so like her to come, but it was not so very much like her to leave without my seeing her. My heart warmed towards her anew at the thought of her tender regard for me.

"Tell me one thing, Mr. Gossitt," said I; "was it a woman who visited me while I was so very sick and insensible?"

"You have been visited daily by women," said he, "and I should not mind being sick myself to have such nurses as you have had since you have been lying there."

"I know that I have been visited by Sylvia and her mother," said I, "but has there not been a young lady here to look upon me while I lay insensible?"

"There may have been dozens of them for aught that I could swear to the contrary; you know that my own visits have been short; for the Lost Pleiad seems always to regard me as an intruder when I come into your room. I believe in my soul that she looks upon you as a piece of her own private property, and that nobody has any right, even to save your life, but herself."

These perplexing replies of the schoolmaster made me feel quite confident that Pauline had actually been to see me, and the thought revived in my heart all the tender feelings which I had before entertained towards her, and which had been almost obliterated by the constant, modest, and sincere attentions of Sylvia, who was as unlike Pauline as it was possible for a young lady of the same age to be.

"I am right, am I not, Mr. Gossitt," said I, once more appealing to the schoolmaster, "in believing that a young lady has visited me from New York? To be candid with you, I suspect

that the lady to whom I have already told you I am engaged to be married has been here?"

"You have a great idea of your personal attractions, Mr. Pepper. You will pardon me for saying so, but really, I think that such an object as you have been for the past ten days, is not exactly what I should think powerful enough to attract a young lady all the way from New York. I don't wish to hurt your self-esteem, Mr. Pepper, but really, as you are fond of candor, I might as well tell you what I think about the matter."

It was very clear that the schoolmaster had made up his mind to foil my curiosity, and that he took pleasure in seeing me annoyed; so, shutting my eyes, and pointing to the door, I requested him to leave me.

"Well, I will go if you wish," said he, "but before I do go I will merely mention to you that somebody has been here to see you, who seemed to feel a tolerable degree of interest in you; but whether it was man, woman, or child, I cannot exactly say just now, as you are in a hurry for me to go."

The schoolmaster put his hand upon the latch as though he was willing to be recalled, but I would not gratify him, although I was in a high fever already from thinking over his words, and trying to determine who it was that had visited me since I had been sick.

"Well, I am going," said the schoolmaster; "have you nothing more to say?"

"Nothing," I replied, "but that I can wait to learn from some one else the secret which you might have disclosed to me."

"Perhaps I may tell you yet," said he.

"I will not hear it from you," I said; "so go and leave me. I prefer not to know from you. I shall know all in good time, if it be right that I should. So leave me to myself."

The schoolmaster, finding that he could no longer tantalize me, reluctantly withdrew, and left me to ruminate on the puzzling information which he had given me. I was soon in a high fever from the mere effect of curiosity, and if Mrs. Swayne had

not very soon after come in to ask if I needed any thing, I might have fallen into a relapse.

"Why, Master Thomas!" exclaimed the good old soul as she entered my room, "what can be the matter with you? Something has happened, I know; your cheeks are so flushed."

"Nothing has happened to me, Mrs. Swayne," I replied, "but I am excited by something that I have heard."

"Goodness! Master Thomas; I hope it wasn't a death-watch, nor nothink of that sort?" exclaimed the old lady, lifting up her hands.

"No, Mrs. Swayne, it was nothing of that sort that has disturbed me; I should not be frightened by Death himself, much less by any ticking of death-watches. I am not superstitious."

"O, don't talk in that awful manner about death, Master Thomas; I am sure I never before heard anything like it in my life. Poor boy, I am afraid your head is affected; let me bathe it in this cool rose water."

"No, no, Mrs. Swayne; that could do my head no good," I said; "but, if you wish to help me, and relieve me from the fever which I now feel, tell me who has been here to see me since I have been ill, and while I was insensible to everything around me."

"O, my!" exclaimed Mrs. Swayne, changing color; "why, you know, of course, who has been here. There has been the doctor"—

"Fie! fie! I know that," I cried.

"Well, there has been the minister"—

"The minister!" I exclaimed, pettishly; "the devil take him, Mrs. Swayne. Do not tell me what I know already. Tell me who has been here to see me whom I have not seen."

"Now, Master Thomas, you must not say such wicked things about the minister; after his praying with you so many times in such a beautiful manner."

"I am sorry for it, Mrs. Swayne. But you vex me by these evasive replies. You deceive me. I can see it in your looks."

You are not candid with me. You are dishonest. You, and Sylvia, and the schoolmaster, are all leagued together to deceive me. I must quit here and go where there is more honesty."

"O, Master Thomas!" you will break my heart by such talk!" cried the old lady throwing herself upon my neck, and bursting into tears. "How can you say such things to me after I have loved you so well?"

I was touched to the heart by the old soul's appeal, but I could not help seeing that her grief was more than half of it a pretext to turn my thoughts in another direction, and get rid of answering my questions. But I was determined not to be foiled, for the more anxiety they had all manifested to avoid my questions, the more intense was my curiosity to know what it was that so nearly concerned me, and yet was so studiously kept from me.

"It is no use, mother," said I, wiping the old creature's eyes, "to attempt to evade my questions. I am now certain that somebody has been here, and I must know who it was, and for what purpose I was visited. Come, tell me at once, and save me from any further anxiety."

"O! Master Thomas, do you think I would keep anything from you that would do you good to know? You know I wouldn't do any such think as that, Master Thomas. Would I, darlink?"

"Who has been giving you money, for my sake; tell me that?" I said sternly, and suddenly changing the drift of my conversation; "come, that I have a right to know, and I must know."

"Why, Master Thomas!" exclaimed the old lady, "what has put such a think as that into your head. Bless your heart, you are getting wild; you must have some sleep."

"Ah! Mrs. Swayne," I replied; "this is not the way to be honest, and frank, and truthful. You are all expecting that I shall be pure and sincere, and yet you are all deceiving me and playing me false."

"O! Master Thomas! I have never deceived you, I am sure. I have told you nothing that is not true," said she.

"Ah! but you have not told me the whole truth," said I; "you hide things from me which I should know. And, if you do not tell me an untruth, you do me as great a wrong by suppressing the truth, which I have a right to know."

"You know I love you too well, Master Thomas, to do anything in the world to distress you; and as for doing you a wrong, O, 'evens! Master Thomas, do you suppose I could ever do such a think as that?"

"Of course, I do not think that you could intentionally injure me, Mrs. Swayne," I replied; "you and Sylvia have both given me too many proofs of your regard for me to think of such a thing; but I see from what you, and she, and the schoolmaster say, that some person has been here to visit me, and given you money for me, and that for some reason, you desire to keep it a secret from me. But I must know. I shall go mad again if you do not tell me."

"Wait until morning, Master Thomas," said Mrs. Swayne, "and then, perhaps, you shall know all about it. Be quiet until then, and you shall know, dear soul, who it was; for, since you have found out so much, I will tell you, Master Thomas, that somebody has been here, who loves you better than I do, but I cannot tell you now who it is. Sleep quietly until morning, and then I may tell you all about it."

"Thank you, thank you," I replied; "I know enough.—And now leave me to my dreams, Mrs. Swayne. I shall sleep better."

The good old soul having first put the room in order, and re-adjusted my pillow, went out and left me to my own thoughts, which were tranquillizing and pleasant.

I had no doubt now that it was Pauline who had come to see me, and that it was her generous devotion to me which had caused her to pay Mrs. Swayne for the expenses incurred by sickness. I could well understand the delicacy of feeling which had imposed secrecy upon Mrs. Swayne in respect to my affectionate visitor, although it was not strictly in accordance with

her impulsive nature to keep herself out of sight. That it was she, I had no doubt, and I reproached myself for having forgotten her while I was waited upon by the tender and modest Sylvia. I will confess, now, that I had at times doubted the constancy of Pauline's love, for there seemed to be something selfish in it, notwithstanding its boisterous intensity, so unlike the tender and modest affection of Sylvia. It was flattering to my pride that Pauline should so readily and without remorse desert her father and mother to follow me ; but there was a want of principle in the act which made me suspect that one who could so easily forget her duty and love to her parents, might by-and-by be equally wanting in duty to me, when her love should cool towards me, and the novelty of her situation wear off. And then her suspicious liason with my old enemy, Mr. Barton, had given me a good deal of uneasiness, and her strange conduct in consenting to marry him and then running away from him with me, had perplexed me not a little. It was very clear that Pauline was a mere creature of impulse, and that when I was out of her sight her love for me was not powerful enough to resist a new temptation. Since I had been lying sick at the house of Mrs. Swayne, and had watched the constant assiduity of Sylvia, who seemed to take pleasure in enduring fatigue for my sake, and who was wholly devoid of all appearance of selfishness in her affection, I had insensibly fallen into a habit of saying to myself, "how differently Pauline would have acted under such circumstances !" And then, as to the beauty of the two : the modest simplicity and retiring manner of Sylvia gave to her lovely face a charm which I had never found in Pauline. In fact, I had almost fallen in love with Sylvia, and forgotten Pauline, when the thought that she had visited me by stealth in my helplessness, revived afresh my love for that fascinating young lady, who exercised an influence over me which I found it impossible to resist.

Under the pleasing reflections that I had been thus visited, and comforting myself with the thought of their being so many good

and loveable people constantly watching over me, and striving to promote my happiness, I had nearly fallen asleep, when it occurred to me that if it were Pauline who came to visit me, the schoolmaster would have had no fears of my taking the *Lost Pleiad* with me when I should leave the cottage. This was a new cause of perplexity to me, and after wearying myself with conjectures a long while, and getting more feverish than ever, I at last sunk into sleep, and was lost to Pauline and Sylvia and all the rest of the world in whom I felt an interest.

CHAPTER XII.

How long I had slept, I know not, but I was awakened from my slumber by hearing a whispering near my bed-side. I did not open my eyes, and discovering immediately that there was a stranger in the room, I feigned to be asleep in the hope of discovering who it was ; but the whispering was so low that I could not distinguish the natural voices of the speakers, excepting that of Mrs. Swayne's, whose peculiarities of pronunciation betrayed her.

It did not occur to me at the time, that I was departing from my rule of strict honesty, by feigning to be asleep, and thus imposing upon others ;—such is the difficulty in this world of deceits and false appearances, where falsehood begets falsehood, of being perfectly true and sincere, let you try ever so hard to be honest. But the trial is worth making, and, from my own experience, I can assure my readers, that the habit of sincerity will so grow upon one by practice, that in time telling the truth will get to be as "easy as lying," which is so easy as to have become proverbial. I wish I could impress upon some of my young readers, and old ones too, the importance to themselves, of being candid, sincere, and perfectly truthful, even in the smallest matters. I am persuaded that no one who once tries

the experiment, will ever regret it, and the probability is that the advantages and pleasures of such a course will be so apparent, that, truthfulness of conduct will be cultivated as a mere matter of worldly policy. Cunning may sometimes gain a point which Truth could not, but Truth in the end must come out the gainer. As the whole history of mankind does not contain one single instance of prosperous falsehood, whether in public, or private life, there is nothing more surprising than that every kind of deceit and duplicity should not be banished at once from the world. We make a terrible outcry because we have discovered the power of steam and electricity, but, until the world discovers so palpable a thing as the power of Truth, it had better not boast too much about its patent discoveries. The phenomenon of a perfectly truthful man, would, no doubt, attract the attention of mankind, and it is a matter of surprise that none of the multitude who are striving to become famous do not adopt this very simple method of attaining to notoriety. All that we know about Diogenes is his candor, and yet he is as well known as Alexander. A cheaper way of becoming immortal could not be hit upon, than to be truthful. But I am digressing from my narrative, although not from my plan, which has been to show the value of sincerity as exemplified in my own experience.

To go on with my narrative. Such was my anxiety to know who my visitor was, and the object of visiting me, that I forgot all my previous resolutions, and continued with my eyes shut, and breathing low as if I were still in a profound sleep.

There was a slight pause in the conversation as I heard them approach nearer to my bedside, and it was with great difficulty that I continued to keep up the appearance of being asleep. I felt the light shine in my face as Mrs. Swayne held the lamp above my head.

"He is as sound as a roach," whispered the old lady; "he sleeps better than he did."

"The fever has left him, and he is so feeble that he will sleep

soundly through the night;" replied another voice, in a low whisper, which I recognized as that of the doctor who had attended me.

There was another long pause which was at last broken by a sigh. I had a great desire to open my eyes and see who it was that had sighed, but I wished to hear what further might be said.

"Is he past all danger, Doctor?" whispered the stranger, feelingly.

"If he should be kept perfectly quiet, he will recover," replied the doctor; "but it is all important that his mind be kept free from excitement."

Had I, then, been so ill, as to be considered even now in danger? The thought of my unconscious peril gave me a start which betrayed itself in my face.

"Hush! hush!" said Mrs. Swayne. "He is waking. Go out, for 'evan's sake, quick."

I opened my eyes to catch a glimpse of my unknown visitor but only saw the retreating forms of two men. I raised myself in bed, but the motion alarmed them and the light was instantly extinguished. I was wide awake at once, and, from a sudden impulse leaped from the bed and rushed towards the door, determined to know who it was that had visited me.

"Good 'evans!" shrieked Mrs. Swayne. "He is running after you. He will take his death."

The two men had ran as far as the door, and, in another moment would have been beyond my reach; for Mrs. Swayne had taken hold of me to prevent me from proceeding further.

"Help! help!" she cried.

The Doctor stopped. The stranger's hand was upon the door which was partly open; he turned his head to look back, and all the light in the entry streamed in upon his countenance, I recognized the face and form of Captain St. Hugh!

My bed room was not so large but that I could easily gain the door without assistance, although only a moment before I hardly

felt strong enough to stand on my feet alone ; I should, probably, have succeeded in catching hold of my unknown visitors, had not Mrs. Swayne seized hold of my arms and checked me for a moment.

"Let me go, woman !" I said, fiercely ; which so startled her that she released me, and I pursued my unknown visitors into the street ; but, they had got entirely beyond my reach, and I fell exhausted upon the wet grass, for it had been raining during the day, and the air was still damp and chilly. There I lay, completely exhausted and unable to rise, until Mrs. Swayne and Sylvia came running to my assistance and helped me back to my chamber.

The two women were greatly alarmed at my imprudent exposure of myself, and, without paying any attention to my exposures, fairly forced me upon the bed again, and covered me over with blankets. In truth, I was nearly as helpless as an infant, and felt myself incapable of making any resistance. I had been very sick, and my physician had done his best to second the disease which had attacked me, by drawing out of my veins all the blood that he could. He was one of the regular bleeders ; and it was not his fault that I was not made a ghost of. The good soul who waited on me so patiently and faithfully during my illness, has often frightened me since, by telling me how frequently the doctor tapped my veins, and what monstrous doses of medicines he administered to me. "And only to think of it," would she say : "so hobstinate was your disease that all the bleeding and physic couldn't break it."

It was, indeed, a miracle that he didn't kill the disease and the patient with it ; but, happily, I had a strong constitution which resisted everything short of poison, and I recovered ; but not until I had been again reduced so low that even the doctor gave up all hopes of my recovery, and all who felt any interest in my welfare looked upon me as lost. My second illness was brought on by my rash exposure, and during many dreary weeks I lay scarcely conscious of existence, except from suffering. I was not ne-

glected in my helplessness ; but I had no recollection on recovering my health of seeing any one near me but Sylvia and her mother, who were constant in their attentions, and untiring in their efforts to gratify all my wishes. It is not to be wondered at that men fall in love with their nurses, and marry them when they get well, for surely a woman never appears so much like an angel as when attending upon your bedside. It is then her hour of triumph ; she feels her power and wins your love by her tenderness and assiduity. As for myself, I experienced each day a stronger and tenderer attachment for Sylvia, and a more grateful feeling for her mother ; for what motive could have induced them to sacrifice so many of their own comforts to increase mine, but the most disinterested affection. As the chances had been altogether against my recovery, they had no reason to anticipate any recompense for their trouble, and, even if I should recover, they knew that I could never know how much they had suffered for my sake, for I was insensible of their efforts in my behalf when they were doing the most. I felt ashamed and humbled within myself, to reflect that I owed so much to these kind hearted women, for whom I had never done the least thing to entitle me to their gratitude ; and when I asked myself if I would have done as much for them, I was forced to confess to myself that I would not. I should have been undeserving the name of a man if I had not felt the strongest gratitude towards them, and swore to myself that I would sacrifice even my life for their sakes. I was satisfied that Pauline had not visited me ; for she surely would not have allowed me to remain ignorant of the fact ; if she had, it was not like her. I began to regret that I had ever promised to marry her, for I was forced to confess that Sylvia was not only as beautiful in person, but infinitely more lovely in mind, and more loveable in temper. It would be but a mere matter of justice, even though my desires did not prompt me to the act, to offer her the life she had preserved, if she would condescend to accept it in payment of the debt I owed her. But my word was passed to Pauline, and I would not break it ; I

must marry her, and I felt impatient to go out that I might redeem my pledge to her; but, in conformity with my resolution not to be guilty of any duplicity, I was resolved to tell her the exact state of my feelings. Sylvia, too, should know how I felt towards her, for I would not have that angelic creature remain ignorant of my gratitude for her services. I was amusing myself with such thoughts as these as I lay upon my bed one morning soon after I began to get well, when Sylvia entered my room, looking, as I thought, more charming and innocent than I had ever seen her before. She had been out in the garden, which must have suffered sadly by her neglect during my illness, and had brought me in a bouquet of pinks and geranium blossoms. She put them upon my pillow, but instead of taking them up I caught hold of her hand and pressed it to my lips, for it seemed to me infinitely more beautiful than the flowers. In truth, Sylvia had the loveliest hand in the world, and if the world thinks that it was only my fondness for her that made it appear so in my eyes, it will be enough, to refute such an opinion, to mention the circumstance well known to many of her friends, that some years after the event just named, the celebrated amateur Sculpture, Mr. Stoutleigh, begged the privilege of modelling it for his famous statue of Pockahontas. No doubt many of my readers will remember the fact, and also that the hand of that statue, which is at present in the lyceum of the Sculptor's native town, has always been considered, by connoisseurs, its finest feature.

Sylvia did not appear the least angry at the liberty I took with her hand, but she immediately drew it beyond my reach, and looked into my face as if to discover whether it were a mere act of gallantry or affection, that prompted me to do such a thing. She must have been satisfied that it was something more than gallantry, for she blushed very red, and said—"I did not offer you my hand, Tom, but the flowers."

"But, I would rather have your hand, darling," said I; "and as I know you wanted to please me, I took it. But you are not offended?"

"If I am, I shall get over it," she replied, and sat down, and pulled out a newspaper from her little work-basket. "Are you strong enough this morning, Tom, to hear a piece of bad news?"

"Is my father dead?" I cried.

"No, no," she said, with an alarmed look; for her question threw me into such an excitement that I leaped up involuntarily, forgetful of her presence, and but for her reply, would have jumped from the bed. I sank back, and she said—"it is the death of some person you little think to hear of."

"It is Pauline?" she shook her head.

"Ah! then!" I exclaimed, "it is my first and best friend; my almost father, whom I loved so well, Mr. Bassett. Is he then dead?"

"No, 'tis not Mr. Bassett;" she replied.

"Well, I care not who it is, then, for I have no other friends whose loss I should mourn;" I replied.

"It is somebody you care more for, and love better, than either of them;" she said, smiling.

"Are you a ghost?" I cried, half frightened, lest she should prove one, and that it should be herself of whom she spoke. She smiled and blushed again, by which I knew she was no ghost, and the death she alluded to was not one that I should be likely to weep over. But I was perplexed to know who it was for whom she thought I cared so much; and she, seeing my curiosity awakened, tried to excite me still more by her enigmatical talk. I named over all my old acquaintances—Sophia Ruby, Mrs. Bassett, Desire Goodwill, and even Mr. Ferocious, for whom I had never been aware of experiencing any very great admiration or tender sympathy. But it was none of these.

"Poor Tom," she said at last; "I will not tantalize you any longer. Do you know that you have been very sick?"

"Too well," I replied, "for your sake and mine."

"Not for mine," she said. "But you did not know that your sickness was fatal, and that you died more than ten days ago?"

Yes, Tom," she continued, as she opened the newspaper she had taken from her basket; "if there be any truth in newspapers, you are a dead man; and here is the melancholy intelligence in the Amboy Times, from which it was copied into all the city papers."

"Let me see," I said; and taking the paper from her hands, I read under the obituary head the following notice:

"Died, in this town, on Sunday the 13th inst., at the house of — Swayne, Esq., Mr. Tom Pepper, in the 20th year of his age. Mr. Pepper was a native of Massachusetts, but was a descendant of a noble English family; and, if he had lived, we understand, he would have been Lord St. Hughes. The writer of this knew him well, and loved him for his virtues and his learning, and deeply sympathises with his afflicted friends and relations.

None knew him but to love him, nor named him but to praise."

"Whose work was this?" said I, blushing at the ironical praise bestowed upon me.

"It was the schoolmaster's," said Sylvia.

"The villain!" I exclaimed; "what could be his motive for perpetrating such a piece of stupidity?"

"Don't blame him for speaking well of you," said Sylvia; "they all do so after a man is dead. And as for spreading the news of your death before it happened, the fault must rest with my mother, who, you know, would never do you any harm."

"And he never named me but to praise," said I; "I dare say he never praised me for anything but dying, if he thought I was dead. The rogue wished me dead fifty times, and for your sake, too, Sylvia."

"The poor man is crazy, I believe," said Sylvia.

"But, tell me all about the advertisement of my death," said I, "and why your mother should have done such a thing?"

"It was when you lay just hovering between life and death," said Sylvia, "and we were expecting your breath, which was so low and faint that it could scarce be perceived, would cease al-

together; the doctor said that you would go off at the turn of the tide. The schoolmaster, who used to call every day to enquire if you were still alive, stopped at the door and found my mother weeping. 'What, is he dead?' asked the schoolmaster. 'No,' said my mother, 'he is not dead yet, but he will not live until morning. The doctor has given him up, when the tide turns he will be no more!' So the schoolmaster, who loves to tell fresh news, hurried off to the printing office and wrote the notice of your death, which you have just read, and it was printed the next morning. The schoolmaster called to offer his services at your funeral—"

"And was very much disappointed, I dare say," added I, "to hear they were not needed—was he not, Sylvia?"

"O! I would be very sorry to think so ill of poor Mr. Gossitt," said Sylvia; "but he did not show quite so much joy on hearing the good news, as my mother did in telling it, I must say. But poor Mr. Gossitt must not be blamed for what he does; the poor man is not right in his mind."

"And did nobody else come to assist at my funeral?" I asked.

"O! yes!" said Sylvia, "the minister came, and so did the sexton."

"Were they all?"

"O, no, not quite all. Some of the neighbours also came in; and everybody was very good; so that my mother said, there was no knowing who our friends were until we died and had no need of their services."

"Yet, none of these were my friends, Sylvia. Did not the publication of my death bring some of those who had been my friends? Or did they stay away because I no longer had need of their services?"

"You have talked too long, already," replied Sylvia, "so ask me no more questions. When you get better I will tell you more."

"I will ask you but one more question, Sylvia, if you will answer that truly. Did Pauline come when the news of my death was published, to see me buried?"

Sylvia cast down her eyes, blushed and answered, "no."

"No! But she has been here, Sylvia, if not then?" I said.

"You promised to ask but one question more, and now you have asked another. If I answer that, you will want to know more, and more, and the doctor will scold me for talking to you; and my mother will be angry with me; and you will be sick again, Tom. So, promise me that this shall be the last question you put to me, before I answer it."

"I promise."

"Well, then, Tom, the young lady you named has never been here;" said Sylvia. And as she said it, she raised her eyes and looked me full in the face, as if she would watch the effect of her answer upon my feelings.

"Then she deserts me in my sickness," said I; "I thought she had been here and you would not tell me. And yet she professed to love me, Sylvia."

"And you loved her," said Sylvia.

"Yes, we are betrothed. I am pledged to her, and must marry her."

"Must!" said Sylvia. "Surely the young lady would not have you upon compulsion. Must is not the right word for lovers; I should think if it were I, I must not have anybody who must have me."

"I must not have you, Sylvia, then," said I, "not because I must have you; but because I must not. But this is musty talk for us. You know, Sylvia, that I have made a vow to be truthful and frank, and to speak my real thoughts; so I cannot be guilty of duplicity towards you, and keep from you the thoughts I have had about you."

CHAPTER XIV.

I was prevented from making a confession to Sylvia of the state of my feelings towards her, by the entrance of her mother and the doctor, who motioned to her to withdraw when they came

in, and I saw her no more until the next morning. The doctor, who was one of those men that try to look wise, but, like most men who try to seem better than they are, only appeared very foolish, was, on this occasion, unusually important and solemn in his actions. He looked at my tongue, and lifted up his eyebrows; he placed his hand upon my forehead, and pursed up his mouth; he looked at his watch, and shook his head; and, upon being asked by Mrs. Swayne what he thought of it, he took out his pocket handkerchief and blew his nose before he replied, that he thought my symptoms were favorable, rather than otherwise.

"He is very much as my husband was once," said Mrs. Swayne; "only Swine was more, what do you call it, in the face, and sweated like everything."

"Very likely," replied the doctor, as he knitted his brows closely together as if to contract some great thought which was growing too expansive for his head. "Very likely, madam."

"Do you think he can come in now?" said Mrs. Swayne.

This question of Mrs. Swayne's started the blood in my veins, and my heart began to throb violently. "O! yes," I cried; "let him come in—let him come in, by all means. It will relieve me to see him. I shall feel better after I have seen him!" for I had no doubt that it was my mysterious visitor who was the person alluded to.

"Don't get excited, my young friend," said the doctor, taking hold of my hand; "we must be always prepared for unexpected events in this world; it is a world of changes, and a man of my time of life, who has seen so much of human nature, of course, expects these things."

"What things?" said I.

"Why, the vicissitudes and changes of life;" remarked the doctor, "as well as of death."

"I am prepared for anything," I replied; "and if I am not as old as you are, doctor, perhaps I have seen as much of human nature, and experienced as many vicissitudes."

The doctor smiled incredulously, and was going to say something, or at least was making his customary preparations, when I told him that if anybody was waiting to see me, I was perfectly prepared to meet him, and that the delay to introduce him would cause me more harm, from my excited feelings, than could possibly result from any surprise which his appearance might occasion.

"I think Master Thomas is right," said Mrs. Swayne.

The doctor looked at his watch again, and said, "Perhaps, madam, you are right, or, at least, not far wrong. I will withdraw, and request him to step in."

The doctor did withdraw himself, but not in so abrupt a manner as I wished ; for he felt of my pulse again, and again looked as wise and as important as he could by such facial manoeuvrings as he was in the habit of making his features undergo. He withdrew at last, but Mrs. Swayne remained, and presently another person softly insinuated himself into the room and stood mournfully by my bed side. I looked up at my visitor, and saw at a glance that he was not the one who had visited me before, and of whose person I had caught but a glimpse. That was a short person, but this was a slender and shadowy man, with his head hanging on one side as if there were nothing to support it. As the gentleman did not seem inclined to speak, but stood looking at me in a dreadfully gloomy and desponding manner, I observed that he wore a very scant and threadbare black cloak, with a little cape that scarcely covered his shoulders, narrow as they were ; the cloak was scant in width only, for it was long enough to drag upon the ground, and the bottom of it had a very rusty look from the clots of red clay which it had caught up in the course of its travels. The rest of his garments were of corresponding quality and fashion, and he wore, as a matter of course, a limpsey and yellowish white cravat. His face was thin and sallow, his hair lank and light coloured, and his hands long, thin, and white.

"This is not the gentleman who has been to see me before in my sickness ?" said I to Mrs. Swayne.

"No, my friend," said the gentleman, in a sad and droning voice, "I, ah, am not, ah, that person you, ah, allude to. I, ah, am another person. Perhaps, I, ah, may say I, ah, am quite another person."

"Yes, master Thomas," said Mrs. Swayne, "he is, I assure you, quite another person ; but, I believe, Master Thomas, a very good person, in which you may have confidence."

"I think, ah, my friend, you had better go out, and leave me alone, ah, with the young man," said my visitor, turning to Mrs. Swayne.

"If you please, I will," replied Mrs. Swayne ; "but don't be alarmed at anything, Master Thomas," said the good soul, as she went out.

What was there to be alarmed at, and what in the world had that dismal apparition appeared to me for !

"Perhaps you, ah, know who I am ?" queried the gentleman, as he carefully placed his hat under my bed, and sat down by me.

"No, I do not ;" I replied. "I have never seen you before, I am certain. Who are you ?"

"I am, ah, professor Willbore," snuffled, rather than said, my visitor ; "I am, ah, a preacher of the gospel, and, ah, professor of dentistry."

"And pray, tell me, professor, in which character you visit me now ?" said I ; "for I am as little in need of your services in one as the other."

"I have, ah, no doubt you think so ;" replied the professor, in the same dismal whine ; "but, I ah, have often seen men whose souls, ah, needed cleaning, ah, as much as, ah, their teeth, who ah, did not know it."

"Pardon me, professor," said I ; "my molars are perfectly sound, I know ; but, as to my morals, it does not become me to say much about them. But I try to be honest and true ; and, therefore, I must speak plainly to you, and tell you that if I am ever so bad, I do not believe that you can improve me by preaching to me."

"I shall, ah, not preach to you," replied the professor, "for I have not got, ah, my notes with me, ah, and I have not, ah, meditated any subject for the occasion. I never preach, ah, without ah, preparing myself beforehand, and, ah, having my notes, ah, with me."

"O, very well, I am glad to hear it," I replied; "and do, professor, make your visit as brief as possible, for really, I do not like you."

"I have generally, ah, been acceptable to the congregations I have preached to, ah, and to my patients, ah;" he replied.

"That may be," said I; "you will pardon my plainness of speech, for I must tell the truth."

"Well, and so must I, ah, and I am going, ah, to do it before I go," said the professor, without altering his voice or manifesting any displeasure at my remarks.

"Perhaps, ah, you think because I am, ah, a preacher of the gospel," whined the professor, "and am, ah, not so, ah, fashionably dressed in my, ah, outward apparel, that I am, ah, not so well off in the world as, ah, some others. But I, ah, have made a sufficiency as a professor of, ah, dentistry, and I own houses, ah, in, ah, New York; and I, ah, am not, ah, dependent upon, ah, anybody else for, ah, my bread."

"Then you are a happy man," I said.

"Well I, ah, have felt myself so, ah, ever since, ah, I made my, ah, peace with, ah, my maker," said the professor,

This turn in the conversation was rather unlucky for me, as it caused the professor to fall into what he called a praying frame of mind, and falling on his knees, he clasped his hands together, and said—

"Brother, ah, let us, ah, try to pray."

The professor did not seem to try very hard, for he prayed a very long prayer, and in such set terms, and with such volubility, that it seemed infinitely more natural and easy for him to address the Throne of Grace than to address even so humble and unworthy a person as myself. In truth, so easily and fluently

did he pray, and so soothing was the flow of his devout supplications, that I was directly lulled asleep, and was only awake by the sudden and startling manner in which he pronounced Amen.

"Brother," said the professor, as he again seated himself by my bed side, "do you feel better?"

"I think I do," I replied. "But I wish you would gratify me by stating the object of your visit, and so relieve my mind from the suspicion that I am to learn some bad news."

"I, ah, will not deny, ah, that something will, ah, be told to you by and by, perhaps that, ah, may be unpleasant for you to ah, hear. But you know all the, ah, troubles of, ah, this world are, ah, sent upon us for our good."

"I do not know, nor do I believe any such thing, professor," I replied. "Such a belief would at once be destructive of all happiness in the world, and, instead of striving to avoid evils and misfortunes, everybody would be running into danger. It was well enough in the old monkish times for men to believe that their happiness hereafter would be in proportion to their unhappiness here, and to glory in self-inflicted flagellations, starvations, and all manner of ascetisims; but you, professor, who have read the Bible, know very well that such a doctrine is contrary to the whole philosophy and teaching of the holy book."

"You, ah, forget, my friend, ah, that Christ, ah, wore a crown of thorns, ah, on his head, ah, and that his, ah, precious back was scrouged with thongs and whips."

"No, I do not," I replied; "but I remember what you forget, that they were not self-inflicted. He bore them patiently, but he did not seek them."

"I, ah, am sorry to see, ah, my friend," said the professor, "that you are still in the, ah, bonds of wickedness and ignorance. It is, ah, not worth while to argue with you, ah, on such matters. I, ah, am regularly ordained as, ah, preacher of the ah, gospel. I, ah, am willing to, ah, instruct you and, ah, to comfort you, ah, spiritually, or in the line of my profession; but I, ah, have not time to, ah, argue with you, because, ah,

you have not yet, ah, been regenerated, nor, ah, got a hope."

"My hopes, Professor, I must admit," said I, "are at a very low ebb; and they have not much improved since you honored me with this visit. If you have any secrets to divulge to me, any ill news to tell me, or any advice to give me, let me know the extent of it at once, for I am harassed and wearied by what I see and hear. I am strong enough to bear up under any affliction, or at least I shall never be better able than now; so let me know at once what it is that you have visited me for, and why you pray over and talk to me in the manner you have been doing. I am no longer a child, and I can bear my fate let it be what it may?"

"I have, ah, got nothing to tell you of myself," said the professor, "but, ah, some of your friends, ah, have, and as your mind has been, ah, very weak, and your body has, ah, been almost in the grave, for you, ah, know your death was, ah, in the, ah, newspaper, the doctor, ah, thought it was best to prepare you for the interview which you are about to have with, ah, certain person, and the, ah, intelligence which is, ah, to be conveyed to you by, ah, that individual."

"What individual?" said I.

"Perhaps I, ah, should apologise," said the professor, "for ah, applying the term individual to him, for I know it is a coarse word to use; and I, ah, generally, ah, avoid it in, ah, my pulpit discourses. The term individual has, ah, often been applied to me by other people, but,—"

"The word is a good word, professor," I replied, interrupting him. "I have no objection to its being applied to me, or to any body else. Let it be an individual, but only tell me who the individual is, that I may individualize him and know for what purpose he visits me."

"It is, ah, no business of mine," said the professor, "but the, ah, doctor said it must be broke to you gradually, and, ah, he sent for me, ah, to prepare you, ah, for it. I ah, have property in the neighbourhood, and I, ah, am, in fact, the owner of this house; but I keep my, ah, office in New York, and I will, ah, give you my card.

I don't preach there statedly because my, ah, health will not permit me to do it."

I was afraid to interrupt him lest I should say something to turn his discourse in a new direction, so I patiently closed my mouth while he went on in the soothing process, preparing my mind for his final disclosure by telling me that his family lived near by because it was cheaper than living in the city; that he had a brother in the ministry; that his wife was poorly, and that his patients in dentistry were chiefly pious people of his own persuasion, whose teeth were generally out of order; and that but for his regard for them he would abandon his profession and devote himself wholly and exclusively to taking care of his property and preaching the gospel.

"But, as I was, ah, saying," said the professor, reverting once more to the motive of his visit, "I, ah, should not have called that person, ah, individual if I had not a meditation on the subject before, ah, speaking on it to you. But, ah, he is, ah, now, waiting to be, ah, introduced to you, and ah, I think his name is, ah, Captain, ah, —"

"Captain!" I exclaimed, as the truth now flashed upon me, "Captain St. Hugh! Is it he?"

"I believe, ah, that is what they, ah, call him," said the professor, "and I heard the doctor say he, ah, thought you, ah, were his son."

"I am his son," I said—"they know I am his son; and is this what they call bad news. If he is here, why do they not let him come in?"

"They, ah, thought it necessary, ah, first to prepare you for it," said the professor, "lest it should, ah, cause a relapse of your disease, ah, I believe."

"Fools that they are!" I exclaimed, "to think it necessary to prepare me for such an announcement as this. And they have deprived me of seeing him, lest my mind could not bear anything so agreeable!"

"You had, ah, better not grow too excited," said the professor

"it, ah, may go to your head. The captain, I believe, is very quiet about it, and will, ah, not like to see you, ah, too much disturbed."

"I am perfectly calm and self possessed," I said. "But I shall not be if you remain here to distract me by your advice. Be so good as to go out and assure my father, or Captain St. Hugh, that I am perfectly quiet, and hope he will not delay any longer to allow me the happiness of seeing him."

The professor then withdrew, and the intervening moments between his exit and the entrance of Mrs. Swayne, accompanied by the doctor and Captain St. Hugh, seemed to me almost an endless period.

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But I now saw him standing at my bed side, looking upon me as kindly and affectionately as he had ever done in my younger years, and the joy that I felt on beholding him again, exceeded my power of speech. But, if the power to express our sensations in words is denied us, our countenances are denied the power to hide our feelings; and my grateful looks must have told my father what my tongue could not.

He attempted to speak, but could only ejaculate, "God bless

you, my boy! God bless you!" Then taking my hand, he sat down, and laying his head upon my pillow, he wept aloud. The tender heart of Mrs. Swayne could not withstand such an exhibition of feeling, so she commenced weeping, too, and made so much noise, that the doctor thought it better that she should indulge her sympathetic manifestations elsewhere; and he took her by the arm and led her out of the room, and had the good sense to remain out himself; so that my father and I were left alone together.

It was some minutes before Captain St. Hugh had sufficient command over his voice to speak, and, as he sat by my side wiping his eyes, I thought I had never before seen him look so well, nor felt such a strong affection for him. He was but little altered since I had seen him last; his head showed more white hairs, and his whiskers were cut shorter, but he was not quite so stout, and his face had lost somewhat of the flush which it used to wear. He had, in brief, become Americanized in appearance, to a certain degree; although he was still an undeniable Englishman in his looks, and had that peculiar frankness of manner, and neatness of person, which distinguish a naval officer.

"My dear boy," said he, trying to cough down his emotion, "had you quite forgotten me?"

"Forgotten you!" I exclaimed; "had you forgotten me?"

"Pardon me, my lad, I did not mean to reproach you," he said; "if you did forget me, you have not forgotten my advice."

"I have done nothing, I hope," I said, "to dishonor the name of St. Hugh."

"No, my son, you have not; and I am grateful to you for it. You are worthy to bear the name of St. Hugh, and henceforth you shall," said he. "But, my poor boy, you must suffer for the sin of your father, and it is that which grieves me, and caused me to weep when I saw you. But I must not disturb your mind to-night. You are too feeble yet to bear what I have to tell you. The physician will not allow me to talk with you to-night, but in the morning you will be refreshed, and then I shall tell you

more. God only knows, my poor boy, what I have endured for you, and how truly I have endeavored to serve you."

I begged him to remain with me as long as he could, and assured him that I was much stronger than the doctor supposed. But he said that it would be better that I should be refreshed by sleep, after being so much excited, and insisted on leaving me. I felt too happy to oppose him; and after bidding me an affectionate good night, he withdrew, and soon after I fell into a refreshing sleep from which I did not awake until the next morning's sun was shining brightly in my face.

CHAPTER XV.

I felt so strong and hearty, after eating my bowl of Indian porridge, which was the unsavory diet prescribed for me by my physician, that I was allowed to dress myself, and received my father in the little parlor of Mrs. Swayne's cottage.

Captain St. Hugh looked brighter and more cheerful, as he saluted me in the morning, than he had done the night before. He complimented me upon my improved appearance, and, having taken his seat by me, said:

"You have been subjected to a hard trial, my boy, but you have come out of it bravely; and now I shall be proud to own you as my son before the world. But I had resolved never again to hold any intercourse with you, if you had proved unworthy the name of your ancestors. I have the honest pride of family, my boy, which every honest man feels who has a family to be proud of; and, as you had shown a disposition to tricks which no St. Hugh had ever been guilty of, I determined to sacrifice my own feelings, and never own you for my son, unless you were worthy of the honor."

"But, I could not desert you, and leave you to the temptations with which you were surrounded without supplying you with the means necessary to maintain your respectability in life; there-

fore I gave orders to your good friend, Mr. Bassett, to give you all the money you might want, but to leave you wholly to yourself, and allow your natural propensities to develop themselves. I kept constant watch of your movements; I tracked you from door to door; I knew all your secrets, and wherever you went there I followed you."

"Then it was you whom I so often met, and imagined I had seen your ghost?"

"Yes, it was I, and many a time have I had to struggle with my feelings which prompted me to stop and embrace you. It was my sole object in life to watch over you, and protect you; my family in England knew nothing of your history, nor even of your existence, and I was too proud, my boy, to introduce you to them as my son, until I myself felt sure of your integrity of character. For, I knew that your conduct would be jealously scrutinized; the unfortunate circumstances connected with your birth would cause you to be slighted, and unless you could found your claim to their respect on your own upright character, you had better never be acknowledged as a member of the family of the St. Hughs. But I am happy to feel assured, that you have conquered the propensity to prevaricate and deceive, which caused me so much unhappiness when I first discovered it, and that I may now confide in you, as a man of honor, and a gentleman."

I felt very much embarrassed to hear myself addressed in this manner by Captain St. Hugh, but my heart swelled with delight to know that my conduct had been approved by him.

"You know, my boy," he continued, "whether you have ever done aught that I could not approve, and I have confidence in you to feel sure you will tell me if you have?"

I then assured him that I had never been guilty of a falsehood since I had seen him last, and had resolved, even though it should cost me my life, never to be guilty of a dishonorable action; and that I was not conscious of ever having been guilty of anything, in thought or deed, which I wished to keep secret from him.

"And you have been in love!" said he.

I then related to him all that had passed in relation to Pauline, to which he listened with great attention.

"And you still love her?" he said.

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"What, my boy!" said he, "would you marry her if you did not love her; for I fear that you do not; and entail upon yourself a life of wretchedness, merely to redeem a pledge that was exacted from you under false pretences?"

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"But that is carrying your principle too far," said he; "for suppose that she should prove herself unworthy of you?"

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"I should be, if I were not convinced from what has already befallen me, that the only way to be really happy is to be true and honest. It will all come right in the end, if I only act right in the beginning, I am persuaded. I could have hardly hoped to meet you again, and to know that you approved my conduct, but I tried my best to be honest and faithful, and now I have the happiness to know you love me."

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"Oh! I can anticipate what you were going to tell me," I said, while a feeling of remorse touched my heart, and I half repented of my want of loyalty to her; "she has gone crazy. Poor Pauline!"

At this my father laughed loud and long.

"Ha! ha! ha! my poor credulous boy!" said he; "she has not been put in a straight jacket, but in a wedding gown. She has been married!"

"Married!" I exclaimed, with a burning blush upon my cheek; "Pauline married! It cannot be!"

"It is true, my boy," replied my father coolly, as he took a paper from his pocket; "and here is the report of it. Yes, my lad, she is married to a man older than I am. But you must give her credit for waiting until she saw your death in the paper. Ha! ha! ha!"

It was as my father stated. On opening the paper I discovered the marriage of Pauline with my old rival, Mr. Barton, and I scarce knew whether to laugh or weep at the discovery. It was some consolation to my pride to know that she had waited until she had reason to believe me dead, before bestowing her hand upon a man, whom she knew I despised. Poor Pauline! She had not half the heart I gave her credit for. If I had entertained any revengeful feelings towards her for her untruth, they would have been amply gratified by knowing she had married Mr. Barton. No doubt, they were heartily tired of each other already.

"Poor Pauline!" I ejaculated, as I thought of her.

"Then you had some remaining affection for her?" said my father.

"She was very beautiful, and, I thought, very fond of me. I hope all women are not like her," I said.

"Of course they are not, my boy," said my father; "you are happily rid of Pauline. Think what your fate would have been with such a woman for a wife! Let her inconstancy teach you caution for the future. You have not yet declared yourself to Sylvia, the young lady who has been so sisterly and kind to you in your sickness?"

"Not yet," I replied.

"Then wait, my boy," he replied, "and be sure that you do not mistake your gratitude to your nurse for the love which a

man should feel for his mistress. I am afraid you are liable to make such mistakes."

"But Sylvia is unlike other women that I have seen," I replied.

"No doubt; but all women are alike, who are young and pretty, to such young fellows as you," said he.

"You will object to Sylvia, perhaps," I said, "on account of her father and mother."

"No, no, my boy. You are unjust to me. I would prefer that you should marry a woman in a different sphere of life; but as the chief end of marriage is happiness, I would have you to marry a woman you can love, and, in the end, it will matter little who her connexions are. But, there will be time enough to discuss this subject. I have one more thing to tell you, which is proper that you should know."

My father appeared somewhat embarrassed and at a loss how to begin the revelation which he was going to make; but, after hesitating a few minutes and taking two or three turns across the little room, he sat down again, and very gravely said:

"I told you, my boy, that you must suffer for your father's misconduct, and that it was the thought of it which had so painfully grieved me on seeing you."

"I have told you, and you doubtless remember, the circumstances connected with your birth; how I met your poor mother, how I imposed upon her innocence, and how keenly I had suffered since in consequence, so that I need not distress you nor myself, by again repeating the story."

Seeing that an allusion to the unhappy subject caused so much distress to my father, I begged him not to repeat to me anything which was not necessary, for I had a very lively recollection of everything he had ever told me respecting my mother.

"It was one of my proudest thoughts, my boy, when I at first found you, and saw, by the sparkle of your eye, the features of your face, and the general carriage of your person, a reflection of those personal qualities which have for ages distinguished my

family," said my father, as he warmly pressed my hand; "that you would one day be the owner of Blackmere, and, as the descendant of old Sir Eustace, do credit to the name of St. Hugh. I have dreamed that the wrong done to your innocent mother, would be, in some degree atoned for, by placing her son at the head of such a family as ours; but this must never be, my boy. No—my crime must be atoned for by you; and I must die with the knowledge that my own child will be deprived of the inheritance of his father. Since we parted last, I have received intelligence from my legal agent in London, who informs me that the marriage with your mother cannot be legitimized, and that, consequently, you cannot inherit the estates and title which by right belong to you; and they must, at my death, descend to a remote relative whom I have never seen."

I cannot truly say that this piece of information did not unpleasantly affect me, for I had indulged in many a dream of Blackmere, and in my darkest days had been buoyed up with the ambitious thought of one day being the master of that noble estate; and I frankly told my father how I felt. But, then, it did not make me unhappy, to know that I should never realize the proud dream in which I had so often indulged. And, in truth, I was too sincerely rejoiced at being restored to my father once more, and to know that he still loved me, and that my conduct was approved by him, to suffer the loss of Blackmere to depress my spirits. And so I assured him.

"You are a generous lad," said my father, "and I am grateful for your forgiveness. Perhaps, in after years, you may feel less disposed to forgive me than you do now. But, my son, I have a fortune for you, saved from the income of my estate, and every shilling of it shall be yours. Here you may be rich, and an honored citizen of a great nation. You need not repine, my son, at not being an Englishman, while you can boast that you are an American with an English father. I am proud of my own country, God bless it! and you, my boy, have cause to be proud of yours. My affections are in England, but my home shall be

with you. It is better that you should never see Blackmere. It would be humiliating to you to visit the home of your ancestors, and feel yourself an alien in it."

I perfectly coincided in my father's opinions, and had no wish to visit the old castle which would have been mine but for the crooked laws and the bar sinister on my escutcheon. I could not feel very keenly the loss of honors which I had never enjoyed; and the mention of the fortune, too, had a consoling effect upon me. I am afraid that the tender affection shown by my father, and his humility in begging my forgiveness, that, owing to his youthful indiscretion, I was deprived of the family honors to which he seemed to consider me as naturally entitled, made me feel a little vain, and less grateful than I should for his kindness. I had never before felt myself of so much importance as I did then, to hear this true hearted gentleman, who was the representative of an old English family, the inheritor of a great estate, and who had been honored for his public services, humbly implore my forgiveness for a wrong which I had never felt, and beg me to accept a fortune which would raise me from beggary to a splendid independence. If I did experience a momentary feeling of pride and self-consequence, I must be just to myself, and say that it soon passed off, and I again felt myself the grateful child of a too generous and indulgent father. I burst into tears as I thought on the change of condition which I had undergone in a few hours, and being still weak from the effects of my disease, probably expressed more sensibility than I actually felt, for my father appeared to be alarmed; and, mistaking the cause of my tears, he attempted in the tenderest manner to soothe me.

"I should have waited, my boy, until you were heartier," he said, "before I told you this unpleasant news. But, now it is out, we must make the best of it. You will not lack for money, my son; you have a good constitution, and, God willing, will soon be up and hearty again; you are young; and know, by actual contact with the world, exactly what it is made of; you must have a clean conscience, and with all these, what is going

to prevent you being happy but your own perverseness. Here is life before you, my lad, now make the most of it, and be happy. Honors will come upon you thick enough, and time enough, if you deserve them, and if you should get them without deserving, you could not enjoy them."

With my heart overflowing with grateful feelings, I kissed his hand, and thanked him for his care of me. Just at that moment Sylvia entered the room, thinking that I had called her, from which circumstance it would seem probable that she was near by, listening for a summons; but I must do her the justice to say that she has often denied the fact, and I believe her; although it is one of our little understood differences for me to pretend to think otherwise. She blushed as she entered the chamber, and would have instantly retired on perceiving her mistake, had not Captain St. Hugh detained her. Never before did she seem so lovely in my eyes; and her confusion, on being requested to remain, by my father, gave her always charming face so bewitchingly beautiful an expression, that I could not help looking up to him with a feeling of triumph, in knowing that I was loved by such an angelic creature. The thought occurred to me that, as he had advised me to make the most of life, I could not make a better beginning than by securing such a partner as Sylvia to assist me in my task; and, after she withdrew, I told him that nothing would add so much to my happiness, and enable me to carry out his advice, as an immediate marriage with that excellent young woman.

"You are your father's own son, I see," he replied; "I thought you might trump higher; but you can only love a woman, even if she is a queen; and, as love is the one thing necessary in marriage, you may be as happy with Sylvia as though she were the daughter of an earl. But, my boy, are you certain she will have you?"

I told him that I felt quite convinced she would not refuse me.

"Well then," said he, "you shall be married to-morrow."

And, jumping up, he ran out to inform Sylvia's mother, of the proposed scheme for depriving her of her daughter.

CHAPTER XVI.—AND THE LAST.

We were not married on the morrow, nor, in some months after; for Sylvia, in the first place, did not yield to my proposal so readily as I had, at first, vainly supposed she would. And, at last, when she did consent to have me, she would not yield to my wish to be married until her father returned from sea, and gave his consent. This act, more than her gentleness and her beauty, endeared her to my father, and made him as solicitous for our union, as he had at first been averse to it.

As an act of justice, and to place me right before the world that I might begin life in my true character, and free from all false assumptions or hurtful imputations, he resolved to honor our nuptials by a public wedding, to which all those who had known me should be invited, and, in their presence, he would acknowledge me as his son, establish my right to the name of St. Hugh, and silence the tongue of slander, by giving the true history of my birth. This scheme was fully carried out, and I had the gratification of seeing at my wedding, nearly the whole of the worthy group of personages whom I have introduced, but under fictitious names, to my readers. We were married in church to gratify my father, and the wedding was celebrated in a fine large wooden house, near the cottage of Sylvia's mother, which he had hired and furnished for the happy occasion. It was a bright day in October, and nothing happened to mar the joyousness and harmony of the proceedings, but a little disturbance caused by my old friend, Ferocious, who was present among the rest, who fancied himself insulted, because he found a newspaper about the premises which had been taken out of a wine basket, that contained a not very complimentary criticism upon one of his works. He rose at the table, and with his face on fire, denounced the whole wedding as

a plot got up for the express purpose of injuring his literary reputation; and, after protesting against it, as an outrage upon his feelings, called upon every friend of his present, to leave the scene of festivities. He stalked off as grandly as so small a person could, but he was followed by nobody but Mr. Tibbitts, who seemed loth to go, and yet afraid to stay. I am happy to state that these two gentlemen, finding that nobody went in pursuit, both returned in about an hour afterwards, and appeared to enjoy themselves exceedingly; and I had the satisfaction of being assured by Mr. Tibbitts, who took advantage of the temporary absence of Mr. Ferocious, that he had no ill feelings towards me or my bride, and that he looked upon the wedding as quite a novelty, and, upon the whole, a very pleasant little affair, "quite a *fete champetre*, in the style of Watteau," as he expressed himself.

It was not among the least of my gratifications on that happy day to meet, once more, Sophia Ruby, a woman of the finest nature and the purest philanthropy, whose little vanities rather tended to set off her excellent qualities, than to obscure their brightness. She came attended by that excellent Quaker gentleman, Friend Goodwill, his simple-hearted wife, his beautiful daughter, and his rogueish son; whose rogueishness, let me add, was all owing to the exuberance of his animal spirits. Mrs. Ruby had not been false to her aspirations for the beautiful, but had rouged her cheeks as usual, and arrayed her person in as great a variety of strong colors, as she well could. She was not the less welcome at my wedding, for bringing with her my old acquaintance, Mr. Carmine, the painter, with whom she was intimate. Mr. Pilfor and Mr. Riquets came together; and appeared greatly improved in their manners. I was happy to learn from them, that they had started a new paper, called the *Flageolet*, of which they were both editors and proprietors. I requested them to consider me as one of their yearly subscribers, but I afterwards learned that the publication ceased after the first number; and I believe, to this day those who paid their subscriptions in advance, have not received back their money.

My first and best friend, Mr. Bassett, with his wife, honored my nuptials by coming, but did not remain to witness my father's explanations; for Mrs. Bassett grew jealous at the attentions which her husband paid to Sylvia, and compelled him to leave before the festivities commenced. Poor Mr. Bassett! His wife only died last year, and that estimable gentleman pays as much respect to her memory as though she had been one of the best, instead of the worst of wives. None of the family of old Gil came to the wedding, although they were all invited, even Mr. and Mrs. Barton; but some of the literary gentlemen whom I had seen at Lizzy's Soirees honored me with their presence, and all put something in the paper about me afterwards. Mr. Wilton, and his quiet friend with the buff vest, came; neither of them was much changed, but the quiet author had allowed his moustaches to grow, which gave a whimsical expression of mild ferocity to his subdued countenance. That remarkable genius, Professor Sprads, and his lady, were there, and played incessantly upon the piano forte; they quarrelled but twice during the whole day; and, if the professor had not got a little excited by the wine he drank, they would have made a very favorable impression on the company, and, as he subsequently remarked to me, might have established some splendid connections for himself.

It would hardly be proper for me to give a detailed account of my own wedding, or to lavish any praises upon my beautiful bride, who appeared, as everybody said, to better advantage than ever before in her life; although this is not generally the case with brides. Her good mother and her rough, but honest father, were quite bewildered, and were the only persons present who appeared to regard themselves in the light of intruders. My mother-in-law was considerably alarmed and mystified by a conversation which she was drawn into by Sophia Ruby, on the subject of matrimony, Mrs. R. going into the very depths of the matter, and talking, as Mrs. Swayne thought, very wildly about circles, and flowers, and spiritual unions.

My father was the most amused and gratified person of all, and although he was not what is called a wag, he was delighted at the oddities of some of my old friends, and took particular pleasure in drawing out their peculiarities. Professor Sprads and Mr. Ferocious were objects of pleasantry to everybody, and the magnificent airs of Mr. Pilfor, with his white cravat and moustaches, inspired every one with awe. The supper table was spread on the piazza, which was festooned with the flags of England and America, and brilliantly illuminated with colored lamps. At the close of the supper my father rose at the head of the table, and requesting attention to a few remarks he had to make, related all the particulars of my birth, my subsequent career, and closed by stating the amount of money which he had invested for me in good stocks. The last announcement caused a spontaneous burst of applause, and a regular hip, hip, hurrah, from all the gentlemen present, who, being all more or less excited by wine, and off their guard, unconsciously paid this tribute to gold, and showed how they valued it beyond all other considerations.

The congratulations which followed the close of my father's speech were quite overpowering; even friend Goodwill appeared to entertain a better feeling towards me, when he found how independent I was in my worldly circumstances.

After the supper, the speech, and the congratulations, Sylvia and myself stole away from the company, and being very weary, retired to rest, while they went out into the orchard to see the fireworks which my father had prepared, under his own supervision, as a wind-up to the day. I did not see them, but the glare of colored lights which shone into my bed-room windows, and the cheers of the company, kept me awake until past midnight.

A steamboat had been provided to convey the guests back to the city, and as they embarked towards morning, they alarmed the inhabitants of the quiet old town by their bolsterous cheers.

I have not alluded to the schoolmaster, as one of the wedding

guests; the truth is, that poor Mr. Gossitt suddenly disappeared from the place as soon as he learned that I was to be married to Sylvia, and we all thought that he had jumped into the river and destroyed himself. But, greatly to our delight, a few months after the wedding, I received a package one day, and on opening it, discovered it to be a presentation copy of his lectures on Shakspeare, which had been published to satisfy a growing demand for criticisms on the great poet.

I have now arrived at the stopping place in the history of my life, where I intended to halt when I commenced the narrative. I do not feel now that my readers will be altogether satisfied with the termination of my career; but it will be very unreasonable in them not to be, for it is very satisfactory to myself.

Lord Bacon says, that the great advantage which romancers have over historians is, that they can shape wants to their own liking, and make a story terminate according to the wishes of the reader. This is undoubtedly true, and if I had been writing a romance instead of giving a true history of a part of my life, it is likely that my story would have ended very differently.

It is due to myself, and to certain persons who, I have been pained to learn, will persist in the belief that I have been drawing portraits of them under fictitious names, to repeat that I have never designed to do such a thing, and that no one can regret the accidental resemblances, which, it is said, have been discovered between certain personages in the course of my trippings.

Some of the people, whose friends have been so keen as to trace out a likeness, I have never seen, and others are intimate acquaintances and friends for whom I entertain too high a personal regard, to dream of caricaturing their follies or peculiarities. In reality, the only person who has been intentionally introduced, and whose weakness and failings have been shown up is the author himself, and no one else has any right to complain. If any person has been amused by the rambling narrative, or had

his thoughts awakened to the importance of frank and truthful dealing in his intercourse with his fellow men, the author's ambition will be gratified, and, slight and imperfect as the work is, he will not regret the snatches of time bestowed upon it, although he is aware that they might have been employed to better advantage on more serious matters.

THE END.